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THE IMMEDIATE CAUSES
OF THE GREAT WAR

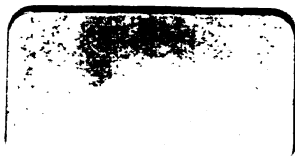
OLIVER PERRY CHITWOOD

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**THE IMMEDIATE CAUSES
OF
THE GREAT WAR**

BY
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PREFACE

The object of this volume is to narrate briefly the direct causes of the European war as they are given in the published documents of the belligerents. These sources are abundantly adequate for determining the immediate responsibility of each nation and apportioning the guilt for this great crime. It may be thought that, inasmuch as each government in publishing its official correspondence has tried to convict its enemies and clear itself and its allies, the statements made are so biased as not to be accepted as evidence. This, however, is not the case. The documents corroborate each other sufficiently to show that statements of fact given in official despatches by ambassadors to foreign ministers and *vice versa* can usually be accepted at face value. The numerous cross-references in the published correspondence enable us sometimes to detect false claims based on the omission, misinterpretation, or even the distortion of facts. Some discrepancies, however, are irreducible, and where such occur, the evidence presented by both sides is given.

In Part I, I have not attempted a general dis-

cussion of the indirect causes of the war, but have only tried to restate some well-known facts that constitute the background of the great conflict.¹ Of course, to understand thoroughly the causes of the war, we should have to go back and explain commercial rivalries, race hatreds, and historic enmities. But for the correct placing of the responsibility for the conflict, a knowledge of remote causes is not so necessary as an intimate acquaintance with the immediate causes. The present generation is not altogether to blame for national antipathies. Many of them are the heritage of former decades and even centuries. Many of them are based on groundless fears growing out of the condition of anarchy that has always characterized international relations. No country can be judged too harshly if she harbors a feeling of jealousy toward her neighbor because she supposes that the line of her rival's ambition crosses the path that Providence has marked out for herself. The nation that fans a

¹ In preparing these two chapters, I have made use of secondary sources almost exclusively. For fuller reading on Part I, the following works are recommended: *Europe Since 1815*, by Charles Downer Hazen; *The Diplomacy of the War of 1914*, by Ellery C. Stowell; *A Political and Social History of Modern Europe*, by Carlton J. H. Hayes; *The International Year Book* for 1912 and 1913; *The Balkan Wars*, by J. G. Schurman; *European History*, by Holt and Chilton; *The New Map of Europe*, by H. A. Gibbons; *The Diplomacy of the Great War*, by A. Bullard; *The Diplomatic Background of the War*, by Charles Seymour. For a brilliant interpretation of these facts see *The European Anarchy*, by G. Lowes Dickenson.

smoldering feeling of rivalry into an act of hostility has the greater sin.

Besides, the spirit of jealousy was not more active in 1914 than it had been in former times. Indeed the relations between the rival groups was less tense at that time than it was a few years earlier. France and Germany had settled all of their important differences except the Alsace-Lorraine question and it had grown too old to figure prominently as a cause of a European war. England and Germany had also about come to an agreement as to the Bagdad railroad, one of the most serious causes of dispute between them. They had even been negotiating with reference to a joint limitation of naval armaments. It is true that no agreement had been reached but the fact that negotiations had been carried on shows that an amicable settlement of the quarrel was within the range of possibility. There is also strong evidence in support of the belief that both the British and German foreign ministers were in favor of a German-English *rapprochement*. Von Jagow, the German foreign minister, declared on August 4, 1914, that he and the chancellor had favored a policy of making "friends with Great Britain, and then through Great Britain, to get closer to France." Even if we should be skeptical as to the sincerity of this statement, we have to admit that the Ger-

man foreign office for about two years (1912-14) kept as its representative in London, Prince Lichnowsky, who was unquestionably in favor of a friendship between the two Governments. His efforts in this direction were cordially received and reciprocated by Sir Edward Grey, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs, who, in the opinion of Lichnowsky, was anxious to have the differences between his country and Germany settled just as had been done in the case of Anglo-French and Anglo-Russian disputes. That the Balkan question had as yet found no satisfactory solution has to be admitted, but the powers that had sustained the greatest grievances in connection with it had accepted, though protestingly, the settlement of the treaties of London and Bukarest (1913).

There was then no question facing Europe in 1914 that a desire for peace and wise diplomacy could not solve. It seems evident, therefore, that the direct causes of the war are more important than the indirect for apportioning the guilt of this great crime. The principal immediate cause of this war was Teutonic aggression in the Balkans. This aggression began as early as 1878, became dangerous in 1908, and criminal in 1914.²

All of Parts II and III, except Chapter XIII

² S., 1007; Lichnowsky Memorandum, Inter. Conciliation, No. 127, pp. 33, 130.

and a few other pages, has been written entirely from the documents given out by the various belligerents. The principal collections of official papers used are the following: The translations made by the *New York Times* and other documents published by the American Association for International Conciliation; *Diplomatic Documents Relating to the Outbreak of the European War*, edited by James Brown Scott and published under the auspices of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; *Collected Diplomatic Documents Relating to the Outbreak of the European War* and *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, printed under the authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1915; the *Austro-Hungarian Red Book*, official English translation; *Diplomatic Correspondence with Belligerent Governments Relating to Neutral Rights* published by our State Department; and supplements to volumes 9 and 10 of the *American Journal of International Law*.

In presenting this digest of the source material on the causes of the war, my aim is not to argue the case, but only to give and systematize the evidence—not all the evidence on all the points, but only adequate evidence on the main points. In this second edition I have been able in some cases to make positive statements where in the original work I could only express

opinions. This has been made possible by the recent publication of some documents that were not known when the first edition came out last year.

I want to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professors Charles Downer Hazen and Carlton J. H. Hayes of Columbia University, and Frank Maloy Anderson, of Dartmouth College, for the very valuable suggestions and criticisms that they have kindly offered. My thanks are also due to my colleagues, Professor David Dale Johnson, of the English department, and Dean James M. Callahan, head of the department of history, who have read portions of my manuscript and have made helpful suggestions and criticisms.

Inasmuch as so many books have already been written on the causes of the war, I feel that I should offer an explanation, if not an apology, for adding to the list even a small volume. My only excuse for so doing is the hope that a brief work will prove useful to college students and others who do not have time to read the fuller accounts. My own experience as a teacher of current European history has caused me to feel the need of such a work.

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A.R.B. Austro-Hungarian Red Book (No. 1)
 A.R.B. (2) Austro-Hungarian Red Book (No. 2)
 B.C. (13) British Correspondence, Miscellaneous, No. 13 (1914)
 B.C. (14) British Correspondence, Miscellaneous, No. 14 (1914)
 B.G.B. Belgian Grey Book (No. 1)
 B.G.B. (2) Belgian Grey Book (No. 2)
 B.W.P. British White Paper
 Col. Doc. Collected Diplomatic Documents Relating to the Outbreak of the European War, printed under the authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office
 Dip. Cor. Diplomatic Correspondence with Belligerent Governments Relating to Neutral Rights and Duties. Department of State. European War, No. 4
 F.Y.B. French Yellow Book
 G.W.B. German White Book
 I.G.B. Italian Green Book
 Jour. (9) Supplement to the American Journal of International Law, vol. 9
 Jour. (10) Ibid., vol. 10
 R.O.B. Russian Orange Book (No. 1)
 R.O.B. (2) Russian Orange Book (No. 2)
 S.B.B. Serbian Blue Book
 S. Diplomatic Documents Relating to the Outbreak of the European War, edited by James Brown Scott and published under the auspices of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

References are to numbers except where page references are indicated.

PART I
SOME INDIRECT CAUSES OF THE
WAR

THE IMMEDIATE CAUSES OF THE GREAT WAR

CHAPTER I

THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE AND THE TRIPLE ENTENTE

DURING the greater part of the first decade and a half of the nineteenth century, the great powers of Europe were united in an effort to curb the imperial ambitions of Napoleon. After years of useless war, Napoleon was sent to a deserved exile, and the balance of power was restored in Europe. A peace congress was then held at Vienna (1814–15), and the map of Europe was rearranged. Europe was sick of war and was anxious for an agreement whereby the nations would be forced to keep the peace. In November, 1815, therefore, the Allies—England, Prussia, Russia, and Austria—concluded a quadruple alliance, pledging themselves to the preservation of “public peace, the tranquillity of states, the inviolability of possessions, and the faith of treaties.” For the next eight years, European congresses were held from time to

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time to enforce this policy. France, too, took part in these meetings, and so there was in effect a sort of league to enforce peace. This league included all the great powers of Europe, and is known as the Concert of Europe.

The Concert subsequently declared in favor of intervention to put down insurrections in the various states of Europe, and carried out this policy by sending troops to stamp out revolutions in Spain and Italy. Great Britain dissented from this interpretation of the treaty of alliance and so dropped out of the Concert. Therefore, the Concert, in so far as it rested on formal engagements, did not last many years. There has been a feeling, however, during the entire century following the Congress of Vienna that certain questions are of interest to all Europe and should be settled only by joint agreement of the powers. Such joint action has been taken occasionally, and in a sense the Concert of Europe continued until the outbreak of the war in 1914.

This important experiment in internationalism was neither a complete success nor an entire failure. The great aim of maintaining peace in Europe was not realized, but some progress toward world peace was probably made. Peace conferences were held, and the principles of international law were expounded. The fact that only four wars (and most of these

short ones) were fought between great European powers during this century-long period is evidence in favor of the partial success of this peace experiment.

The Concert might have accomplished its purposes more completely but for certain mistakes made in the early years while it was dominated by a reactionary royalist, Prince Metternich. During this period it ignored two powerful forces—the spirit of nationalism and the spirit of liberalism. In some sections of Europe (notably in Germany, in the Habsburg Empire, and in the Italian and Balkan peninsulas) there was a growing demand for a change in political boundaries in the interest of racial and linguistic unity; Metternich opposed all these aspirations and insisted on the maintenance of the *status quo* regardless of national feeling. The people all over Europe were clamoring more and more for a voice in the government of themselves; Metternich's policy was one of rigid adherence to the autocracy of the old régime. Thus nationalism was allied with liberalism; internationalism, with despotism. Nationalism was progressive; internationalism, reactionary. Nationalism was going with the current; internationalism was pulling against it. Nationalism was supported by patriotism; internationalism by pacifism. In the struggle between these two ideals, the advantage, though

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not altogether the right, was with nationalism. The result was a complete triumph for nationalism and the eclipse (temporary it is to be hoped) of internationalism. A triumphant, undisciplined nationalism is in large part responsible for the war of 1914. If internationalism had in the beginning joined forces with democracy instead of autocracy and had made reasonable concessions to nationalism and thus neutralized patriotism, she might have triumphed instead of her opponent. If such had been the result, the summer of 1914 might have ushered in an era of world peace instead of one of world war.

The failure of Europe to unite into a successful permanent league to enforce peace based on the principle of a concert of action left the way open for the formation of smaller groups based on the principle of the balance of power. We thus find that early in the twentieth century the great European powers were alined into two rival groups. Probably as good a starting-point as any for the history of these groups is the Treaty of Frankfort, signed in 1871. One of the provisions of this treaty was that Alsace and a part of Lorraine should be ceded to Germany. The loss of these provinces was a great humiliation to France. When the proposed treaty was brought before the French assembly for ratification, it is said that the members

The Triple Alliance and Triple Entente 7

broke down and wept over the clause that compelled them to sacrifice a portion of their country's territory. The French people have never allowed this feeling to die out, but on the contrary have been nursing it to keep it warm. They have regarded Alsace and Lorraine as lost provinces, and have kept the statue in Paris representing Strasburg (in Alsace) draped in mourning.

Bismarck realized that this feeling would lead France into another war with Germany unless he could continue to keep the odds against her. After 1871 he did not want war; he preferred a period of peace for the internal development of the newly-created empire. Besides, he thought it would not be safe to subject united Germany to the strain of another war until the cement that held the members of the union together had had time to dry. His policy, therefore, was to isolate France and thus deprive her of all hope of success in a war with Germany. To this end he approached Austria and Russia with a view to allying them with Prussia. Since the war of 1866, he had maintained a very friendly attitude toward Austria. He had also in 1863 offered the Tsar of Russia aid in putting down the Polish revolt and had thereby won his lasting gratitude. Conditions being thus favorable, he was able to bring the rulers of Austria, Germany, and Russia together in Berlin (1872) and

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the Three Emperors' League was the result. It was not an alliance but apparently an informal understanding.

The success and permanence of this league was endangered by the rivalry of Austria and Russia in the Balkans. This rivalry became acute at the time of the Berlin Congress (1878). Russia had, without the aid of the great powers, concluded a successful and righteous war with Turkey and forced her to sign the treaty of San Stefano. By the terms of this treaty Turkey was left with only a strip of territory in Europe, and Russia was put in a favorable position with reference to the Balkan states. Great Britain and Austria-Hungary protested against this settlement of the Balkan question, and a European congress was held at Berlin to revise the treaty of San Stefano. The decision of the powers was a diplomatic victory for Austria-Hungary and a defeat for Russia. Bismarck supported Austria-Hungary's demands in the congress and thereby strengthened the cordial feeling existing between his country and Austria-Hungary but at the same time incurred the ill will of Russia. The Three Emperors' League now fell into abeyance, and though Russia did not formally withdraw at this time, relations between Germany and Russia were strained for a few years.

Bismarck, feeling that he would have now to

count on the possible enmity rather than on the friendship of Russia, decided to draw more closely to Austria-Hungary. In 1879 Germany and Austria formed a defensive alliance against Russia. The treaty provided that if "one of the two Empires were to be attacked by Russia, the two contracting parties are bound to lend each other reciprocal aid with the whole of their imperial military power, and, subsequently, to conclude no peace except conjointly and in agreement." If one of the contracting parties should be attacked by any power other than Russia this mutual obligation was to be binding only in case the attacking power were "upheld by Russia."¹

Italy became a party to the alliance in 1882. To take this step Italy had to suspend a deep-seated historic enmity toward Austria, for this power had frequently thwarted efforts on the part of the Italian people to liberate and unify the peninsula. Besides, she still held the Italian-speaking districts of Trieste and Trent, which Italy coveted. One reason for her taking this unnatural step was that she was ambitious to play the rôle of a great power and was angered at France for having taken Tunis (1881), because she had picked out this region as a suitable field for Italian occupation.

¹ For the whole treaty, see Stowell, *The Diplomacy of the War of 1914*, 540-41.

The league of the three powers was known as the Triple Alliance. It was made for a definite period and has been renewed from time to time. Italy did not formally withdraw from it until May, 1915. The text of the treaties between Italy and the Teutonic powers has never been published in full; but, judging from the clauses that are known, we infer that these treaties embody substantially the same engagements as those of the Austro-German alliance, with additional agreements regarding the Balkans.²

Bismarck had thus succeeded in his policy of isolating France. But this period of isolation ended in 1891, when France and Russia formed the Dual Alliance. The terms of the agreement have not been made public, but apparently there are binding engagements as to joint action in certain international situations. In July, 1914, the French ambassador at Berlin told Von Jagow, German secretary of state, that France's obligations to Russia were as binding as those of Germany to Austria.³

The formation of the Triple Alliance and the Dual Alliance had divided Europe into two hostile camps. Great Britain for a while stood aside in isolation, maintaining a policy of neutrality toward both groups. She thus had the power of tipping the scales in favor of the side

² For the articles that have been published, see p. 182.

³ F. Y. B., 74.

to which she might throw her support. There were causes of friction between Great Britain and members of both groups, and she might at any time give up her position of neutrality and identify herself with one side or the other.

The friendship that Bismarck had cultivated between Germany and Great Britain began to wane in the 'nineties. The Conservative party, which ruled England from 1895 to 1905, favored imperialism and a strong foreign policy. In the meantime, Germany too had entered upon a policy of industrial development and colonial expansion. As a result of these imperialistic ambitions a feeling arose in both countries that the interests of Germany conflicted with those of Britain. Jealousy and suspicion now took the place of the friendship and confidence that formerly existed between these two great kindred peoples. It was thought by many Englishmen that Germany had "an ambition to deprive their country of her maritime supremacy and to rule the world." On the other hand, the charge was made in Germany that England was trying to isolate her and thus prevent her from playing an important part in world politics. These unsatisfactory relations were aggravated by Germany's attitude toward the Boer struggle with the British (1899-1902). "The British were especially aroused by the more or less open favor and sympathy which the em-

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peror and official classes of Germany showed to the Boers.”⁴

In addition to this general feeling of distrust, there were specific instances of friction between these two great powers. One important controversy was that over the Bagdad Railroad, the construction of which was in line with Germany's ambition to extend her influence over Turkey. Germany began her policy of economic penetration of the Ottoman Empire about 1875, at which time the Anatolian railroad from Scutari (opposite Constantinople) to Konia was built for the Turkish Government by German engineers. This road afterwards came into the possession of a German corporation, and in 1899 Emperor William II obtained from the Sultan permission to extend it through Bagdad to the Persian Gulf. Along with the railroad franchise there went the privilege of building branch roads, and broad mining, irrigation, and other concessions.

Germany's avowed purpose was economic, the desire to develop the rich natural resources of Mesopotamia to the advantage of both this neglected district and Germany. It is more than likely, however, that her aims were political as well as economic. If her plan were realized, she would have convenient bases for

⁴ Hayes, *Political and Social History of Modern Europe*, II, 699-700.

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propaganda against Egypt and India in time of peace and of attack in time of war.

It is no wonder, therefore, that British public opinion took affright and British statesmanship determined to thwart the scheme. The classes in England and Russia engaged in commerce and shipping on the Tigris River contended that the economic interests of their respective countries would be menaced. The patriots in England feared for the safety of the empire. The result was that Great Britain determined to shut off the road from the Persian Gulf.

The only suitable terminus for the road was in the little principality of Koweit, the ruler of which was virtually independent of Turkey. In 1899 England signed a secret treaty with the Sheik of Koweit, pledging him protection on condition that he would not dispose of any of his territory without the consent of the English Government. Great Britain also signed an agreement with Russia in 1907 whereby protectorates over southern and northern Persia were established by these two countries respectively. In this way the Bagdad Railroad was shut off not only from the Persian Gulf but also from central Asia.

The result was very unfortunate for the relations between Germany and England. The German people were aroused to renewed bitter-

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ness against Great Britain which country, they considered, had prevented the success of an important business venture purely out of jealousy and ill will.

Germany, however, persisted in her plan and a few years later succeeded in getting the consent of both Russia and Great Britain to the completion of the railroad. Russia agreed to give up her opposition by an understanding arrived at in 1911, and Great Britain by one that had been negotiated, though not consummated, just prior to the outbreak of the war in 1914. Thus just on the eve of the Great War, England and Germany had virtually settled amicably one important cause of difference between them.

Another cause of friction between England and Germany was "the rapid development of Germany's naval power." Emperor William thought that Germany's future lay on the ocean, and the imperial navy under his fostering care had been growing rapidly. This increase in the German navy made it necessary for England to build more ships. For Britain must maintain her naval superiority if she is to keep in touch with her colonies and thereby hold her empire together. Besides, if Great Britain should lose control of the sea, her enemy could starve her into submission in a few months. Self-preservation, therefore, demands that the island kingdom must remain as strong on the water as any

two combined powers. Thus, when Germany began to build up a strong navy, there was placed upon the British Government a heavy burden, if she were to continue to "rule the waves." Besides, there was present the constant expectation and fear that Germany was preparing to contest Britain's control of the sea.

Such a situation could be remedied only by an understanding between the two powers providing for joint limitation of naval armaments. Britain proposed such an agreement but the suggestion was flatly declined in 1911 by the German chancellor. Next year, however, negotiations were started looking to an agreement on this important point of dispute. An understanding could not be reached, owing to the unreasonable demands made by the German Government, and so the efforts to form a treaty of friendship between the two powers failed.⁵

Great Britain's relations with the rivals of the Triple Alliance had also been characterized by friction. She had for a long time opposed Russia's ambitions in the Balkans. Russian and British interests had also clashed in Persia, Afghanistan, and China. Russia had joined France in the Dual Alliance largely on account of England's opposition to her, and Great

⁵ N. Y. *Times*, June 2, 1918; Pub. of Amer. Asso. for Conciliation, No. 127, 168-172.

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Britain had Allied herself with Japan because of the fear of Russian aggression in the far East.

Great Britain and France were also still rivals at the end of the nineteenth century. Conflicting ambitions as to certain parts of Africa were the main cause of friction. In 1879 they had intervened jointly in Egypt in the interest of English and French creditors. When a rebellion broke out in 1882, France declined to aid Great Britain in its suppression. The latter was thus left in sole control of the country, though France objected to Britain's position in the province. Later (1898), the Egyptian Sudan was brought under the authority of the English Government. Britain's progress southward conflicted with the ambition of France to expand eastward from the Congo. France desired to control the whole Sudan from the western coast to the Abyssinian region in the east. In furtherance of this plan, Captain Marchand in 1898 led an expedition from the French Congo eastward and took possession of a little island, Fashoda, in the upper Nile region. As Fashoda was in territory that Great Britain had staked off for herself, its occupation by the French aroused great excitement among the English people. General Kitchener was sent south from Khartum and war seemed inevitable. Happily, France yielded and the in-

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cident was closed by an agreement between the two countries in 1899.

In the midst of her trouble with Great Britain, the French Government called to its foreign office in 1898 Théophile Delcassé, one of the ablest diplomats of the modern period. He at once entered upon a new and vigorous foreign policy which was calculated to relieve his country of the comparative isolation in which she had hitherto been placed. His plan was to court the friendship of Italy and Great Britain.

About this time, too, relations between England and Germany were tense because of the former's policy in Asiatic Turkey and the latter's opposition to it. For at the end of the nineteenth century the Anglo-German quarrel over the Bagdad Railway scheme was at its height. England would, therefore, naturally be favorably disposed toward a friendship with Germany's rival. Accordingly, the advances of Delcassé were kindly received by the British Government and King Edward VII used his influence in favor of an understanding between his country and France. The result of these efforts was a treaty of mutual understanding between the two countries, signed in 1904. By this treaty England was for the future to be unhampered in Egypt, France was given a free hand in Morocco, and other points at issue be-

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tween them were settled. All causes of friction now being removed, there gradually developed during the decade of 1904-1914 "particularly friendly relations between the peoples and governments of France and Great Britain."⁶ The mutual understanding growing out of this friendship is known as the *Entente Cordiale*.

In the meantime Russia had been badly defeated by Japan in the war of 1904-05. Russia's weakness was revealed to such an extent that the English people became less afraid of her. Then, too, since England had gotten control of Egypt she had ceased to be so nervous about the possibility of her road to India being blocked by Russian ambition in the Balkans. The real menace to India and Anglo-Indian communication was now thought to be the rapid growth of Teutonic power and influence in the Balkans and Mesopotamia. Besides, Great Britain had come to regard Germany as the "most powerful nation on the Continent, and her most active rival for the world's commerce."⁷ Her fears had also been aroused by the rapid growth of Germany's navy and merchant marine. The time was thus ripe for an understanding between Britain and Russia, and so in 1907 these two powers came to agreements settling all disputes as to their relations with Persia and Afghanistan. These agreements

⁶ Hayes, II, 702.

⁷ Stowell, 17.

“practically transformed the *Entente Cordiale* between France and Great Britain into the Triple Entente between Russia, France, and Great Britain.”^s It was never a formal alliance, but was a kind of “gentlemen’s agreement.” Japan was already in alliance with Great Britain. In 1910 she and Russia came to an understanding regarding Manchuria. So Japan had virtually ranged herself on the side of the Entente.

^s Hayes, II, 702.

CHAPTER II

FRICTION BETWEEN THE RIVAL GROUPS

It has already been shown that England was drawn into a friendship with France and Russia because of the friction that had developed between her Government and that of Germany. During the decade preceding the war, occasions of dispute also arose between the other members of the Triple Entente—Russia and France—and the Triple Alliance powers. The most serious of these quarrels were those between Russia and Austria over the Balkans and France and Germany over Morocco. Germany was in favor of the “open-door” policy with reference to Morocco and was opposed to the arrangement provided for by the agreement of 1904 between Great Britain and France. She did not, however, protest against this arrangement, probably because she felt that the odds against her were too strong for her to risk a war; but in the next year, after Russia had suffered great defeats at the hands of Japan, she concluded that the opportunity had come for her to declare her disapproval of the French Moroccan policy. On March 31, 1905,

the German Emperor stopped at Tangier on his way to Constantinople and made a speech. He declared that the Sultan of Morocco was an independent ruler and that all nations had equal rights and should enjoy equal opportunities in his dominions. This was a challenge to France, but the latter country was not in a position to take it up owing to the weakness that her ally, Russia, was then exhibiting. The question was referred to an international congress held at Algeciras, Spain (1906). Great Britain and Italy supported France in the congress, and France won a diplomatic victory. It was decided that the merchants and investors of all the signatory powers were to have equal opportunities in Morocco but that France and Spain were to supervise the policing of the country. The result of Germany's attitude was to strengthen the friendly feeling between England and France.

In 1908 another occasion of dispute arose between France and Germany in Morocco. Six soldiers under the control of the French deserted at Casablanca and appealed to the German consul for protection. Three of these soldiers were of German nationality. The German consul, thinking that all were Germans, gave them a safe-conduct to a German ship. The French officials disregarded this safe-conduct and arrested the soldiers before they could

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embark. Germany protested most vigorously against this action, claiming that it violated her right to protect through her consuls German subjects in Morocco. France conceded to Germany the right to protect her nationals in Morocco, but contended that this right could not be exercised in such a way as to deprive her military officials of authority over their soldiers. The difficulty was settled by referring the questions in dispute to The Hague Tribunal.

Germany and France also signed a convention in 1909, by the terms of which Germany agreed to cease her opposition to French political supremacy in Morocco and France agreed to "safeguard the economic equality" of all countries in the Sultan's dominions. This agreement, however, was not approved by the political leaders in Germany and Von Bülow, who negotiated it, was superseded as chancellor by Von Bethmann-Hollweg. The new chancellor was opposed to the convention and determined to annul it as soon as a proper occasion should arise. The opportunity came in 1911, when France sent troops to occupy Fez, the Moroccan capital. In July of this same year Germany sent a warship to the port of Agadir, declaring that its presence was necessary for the protection of the interests of German capitalists. At the same time she stated

that the "warship would be withdrawn as soon as conditions were sufficiently settled to admit of French withdrawal from Fez."¹ Both countries began preparations for war, and Great Britain announced that France could count on her support. The trouble, however, was settled by another convention (November, 1911) between Germany and France. By this second agreement, the "open-door" policy in Morocco was guaranteed by France and her political supremacy was recognized by Germany. The latter nation was also given a part of the French Congo.

The long controversy over Morocco was thus finally settled but in a way that was unsatisfactory to both parties. The French were displeased because they had lost a part of their territory and had gained nothing but a recognition of a right which they already had been exercising. Germany, too, was disappointed in not being able to win a port on the Moroccan coast. She also considered that her "position as a world power" had been jeopardized "by the joint machinations of the French and the British."² The friendship between England and France had been strengthened as well as the hostility between Germany and her rivals; and thus the Moroccan question in passing left behind a legacy of jealousy and hatred between

¹ Hayes, II, 705.

² Hayes, 706.

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the Entente and its enemies that foreboded greater trouble in the future.

Although Morocco had thus been eliminated as a source of trouble, still the peace of Europe was being threatened from another quarter. A growing friction between the rival groups had developed over the Balkan situation. To understand this situation it is necessary to review briefly some of the events out of which it has grown.

There were many different peoples in the Balkan peninsula at the time it was overrun by the Turks. Of these the most important were the Serbs, the Bulgars, the Albanians, the Rumanians, and the Greeks. The Turks ruled these subject races very harshly and unjustly, extorting from them exorbitant and at times almost ruinous taxes and subjecting them to all sorts of cruel indignities. They were, however, permitted to retain their religion, their civil laws, and in large measure the right of local self-government. They had their own magistrates and thus controlled the local administration. These concessions helped to keep alive national sentiment among the subject peoples, and furnished them with a governmental machinery that could be employed against their oppressors when the opportunity for revolt should arise.³ The Turkish Government was

³ Hazen, *Europe Since 1815*, 603.

thus supplying its Christian subjects with grievances and at the same time giving them the means whereby their discontent could find effective expression. Under such circumstances, revolts could be expected at all favorable opportunities.

The first of the Christian peoples to win their independence were the Serbs of Montenegro. They claim never to have been conquered by the Moslem invaders, but their independence was not recognized by the Turkish Government until 1799.

In 1804 there was an unsuccessful revolt in Serbia. Another uprising eleven years later was partially successful, but it was not until 1830 that Serbia was recognized by Turkey as an autonomous principality.

The Greeks rose against their oppressors in 1821 and carried on against them for about eight years a war that was characterized by barbarous practices on both sides. Finally, France, Great Britain, and Russia intervened and demanded of Turkey that she grant local autonomy to Greece. This demand was refused, and the Allied powers attacked Turkey, destroying her fleet in the battle of Navarino. Two years later, Turkey yielded and by the treaty of Adrianople with Russia (September, 1829) recognized Greece as an entirely independent state. The independence of the new

state was placed under the guarantee of the liberating powers, France, Russia, and Great Britain, and in 1833 Otto, the son of the King of Bavaria, was placed on the throne as the first ruler of the Hellenic Kingdom.

The Rumanians are a mixed race, composed of Slavic, Gothic, Tartar, and Latin elements. They are proud of the name Ruman (Roman) and claim to be descendants of colonists settled north of the Danube (Dacia) by the Roman emperors. By the treaty of Adrianople, the provinces Moldavia and Wallachia (now Rumania) were practically, though not nominally, taken out from under the control of Turkey and placed under the protection of Russia. At the close of the Crimean War, in which Russia was defeated by France and England, Russia had to give up her protectorate over these two provinces and agree, by the treaty of Paris (1856), that thenceforth they should be "independent under the suzerainty of the Porte."⁴ This arrangement, however, was not satisfactory to the Rumanians, who wanted the two provinces united into one nation and to be entirely free from Turkish control. In 1859 Moldavia and Wallachia each elected the same man as prince and so virtually became one principality. "Later the two assemblies were merged into one, and in 1862 the Sultan recognized these changes."⁵

⁴ Hazen, 615.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 618.

In 1876 the Christians in the province of Bulgaria revolted against the Ottoman officials and put some of them to death. The Turks in their effort to put down the revolt committed awful atrocities. Their acts of savage cruelty aroused public sentiment all over Europe. Even in England, the traditional friend of the Porte, sentiment was so strong that the Disraeli ministry could do nothing in support of the Ottoman Government. Mr. Gladstone, then in retirement, "urged that the Turks be expelled from Europe 'bag and baggage.'"⁶ Serbia and Montenegro joined the Bulgarians and declared war on Turkey.

The Russian people sympathized warmly with their kinsmen and co-religionists of the Balkans, and many of them enlisted in the army as volunteers against the Turk. Pressure was thus being brought to bear on Alexander II to intervene. He did not want war, declaring that he had no intention or desire to take Constantinople, but felt that Europe ought to put a stop to the Balkan troubles. He also said that he would have to undertake the task singlehanded if the other nations would not join him. Finally, after long delays and fruitless diplomatic negotiations, Russia issued a declaration of war against Turkey on April 24, 1877. After the defeat of Turkey, the treaty of San Stefano

⁶ *Ibid.*, 622.

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was signed in 1878. By this treaty Serbia, Montenegro, and Rumania were declared independent; Bulgaria became an autonomous state with a good deal of territory, Eastern Rumelia and most of Macedonia being given to her; and Turkey retained in Europe "only a narrow broken strip across the peninsula from Constantinople west to the Adriatic."⁷

All the countries interested except Russia and Bulgaria were dissatisfied with the treaty. Both Serbia and Greece wanted a part of the Macedonian territory that had been given Bulgaria. But the most effective opposition came from the great powers. Great Britain and Austria-Hungary contended that Russia could not change the Balkan map without the consent of the other powers, and Germany supported this contention. Austria-Hungary had an ambition to expand toward the *Ægean*, and both she and Great Britain were afraid that Russia would become too powerful in the Balkans and extend her authority to the Mediterranean. By a threat of war, Russia was frightened into yielding, and a conference of the powers was held at Berlin. The treaty of Berlin (signed July, 1878) was thus substituted for that of San Stefano (signed March, 1878). By the treaty of Berlin, Montenegro, Serbia, and Rumania became independent; Bul-

⁷ Hazen, 624.

garia was made an autonomous principality tributary to Turkey. Eastern Rumelia and Macedonia were, however, left out of Bulgaria, Macedonia being restored to Turkey and Eastern Rumelia being made an autonomous state under Turkish control. Bosnia and Herzegovina were turned over to Austria-Hungary to be administered by her, though they were still to be nominally a part of the Ottoman Empire. It is needless to say that the Bulgars were dissatisfied with this arrangement and were determined to modify it as soon as they could with safety. This they did in 1885 when Eastern Rumelia was united with Bulgaria.⁸

These important changes had all been made in southeastern Europe without any serious menace to the general peace. But early in the twentieth century the Balkans gave promise of trouble between the rival groups. By this time Germany and Austria-Hungary had entered upon a policy of economic and political expansion toward the Ægean and had an ambition to bring the Ottoman Empire within their sphere of influence. These efforts had been rewarded with considerable success. Serbia had been under the tutelage of Austria-Hungary from 1878 to 1903, when King Alexander was assassinated and a new ruler, who was friendly to Russia, was placed on the Serbian

⁸ Hazen, 620-27.

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throne. The rulers of Bulgaria and Rumania were Germans and the crown prince of Greece was a brother-in-law of the Kaiser, William II. Germany had obtained from Rumania an important railroad concession and from Turkey the right to build a railroad to Bagdad and the Persian Gulf. German officers went to Turkey to train her soldiers, and the Teutonic powers showed that they intended to bolster up Turkey and support her against her enemies. Germany had thus supplanted Great Britain as the protector of the Ottoman dominions. Out of this policy there had grown up in the Balkans a serious rivalry between Russia and the Teutonic powers.

This rivalry reached the danger point in October, 1908, when Austria-Hungary formally annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Turkish provinces which she had been administering since 1878. It was a favorable time for such an act of aggression, for conditions in the Ottoman Empire were unsettled as a result of a revolution that had been carried out in the previous summer. At about the same time, Bulgaria severed the weak bond that held her to the Turkish Empire by declaring her absolute independence. Both of these acts were a clear violation of the treaty of Berlin, but Turkey, conscious of her weakness, was induced to acquiesce in this loss of territory.

The powers, however, did not consider that Turkey alone was concerned with this infraction of a treaty to which they were signatories. Italy, Great Britain, Russia, Montenegro, and Serbia were all displeased at Austria's action. Serbia had hoped that as long as the provinces maintained a nominal connection with the Turkish Empire, some stroke of fortune might cause them to fall to her.⁹ She was especially anxious to have them because they would give her an outlet to the Adriatic and would enable her to round out her dominions if she should ever become the Greater Serbia of her dreams, a kingdom which would include as subjects the Serbs of the then Austro-Hungarian provinces as well as those of her own country.

Russia, too, was very much excited over the annexation. She felt that not only were the interests of her protégé, Serbia, compromised, but that her own position in the Balkans was also jeopardized. She determined to support Serbia, and since the diplomatic negotiations offered no satisfactory adjustment of the differences, she began to mobilize her army.

At this juncture Germany declared in favor of Austria-Hungary and announced her willingness to give the latter country military assistance if necessary. Germany was free to take this stand because the Young Turk party, which

⁹ Stowell, 21.

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was responsible for the July revolution and which had gotten control of the government, had shown signs of preferring Great Britain to Germany as their country's protector. This fickleness on the part of the Ottoman Government gave Germany the opportunity of disciplining her new friend and at the same time of doing a good turn for her old ally. Russia had not as yet recovered from the military weakness exhibited in the Russo-Japanese War, and great Britain and France, being unwilling to go to war over this quarrel, advised her to yield. She, therefore, withdrew her opposition, and Serbia, under pressure from the Entente powers, declared on March 31, 1909, that she acquiesced in the annexation of the provinces as a *fait accompli*.

The crisis was thus passed without war, but a feeling of humiliation and bitterness was left in the hearts of the Serbs and Russians. Smarting under this feeling, "the Russian Government began to reorganize its army, to construct strategic railways, and to do everything in its power to insure Russia against a like humiliation in the future."¹⁰

In the early fall of 1912, war broke out between Turkey and the Balkan states of Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece. The time was favorable for joint action against the Otto-

¹⁰ Hayes, II, 708.

man Empire, for that power had been weakened by the Turco-Italian war and by internal troubles in Albania and Macedonia. The Christians in Macedonia had been oppressed for years, and conditions were not improved when the Young Turks came into power in 1908. A spirit of discontent began to manifest itself in secret revolts and assassinations, which was aggravated by the ineffective efforts of the Turkish officials to allay it. These unjust and unwise measures caused the Serbs, the Bulgars, and Greeks in Macedonia to suspend their hatred of each other and thus made it easier for the Greek and Bulgarian Governments to bury their differences and act together against the common enemy. The Albanians, despite their historic friendship for the Porte, were also chafing under recent grievances. Revolts broke out in 1910 and 1911, in which the Montenegrins made common cause with the insurgents. This brought on a friendly feeling between the Northern Albanians and the Serbs of Serbia and Montenegro.

Conditions were thus favorable for a union of the Balkan states against Turkey. Accordingly, in the spring of 1912 engagements were entered into whereby Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, and Montenegro were united into an alliance against Turkey, the object of which was the liberation of the Balkan Christians from Otto-

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man misrule. The formation of this alliance did not mean an immediate break with the Porte, and it was not until October that war was declared on Turkey.¹¹

In the meantime, the powers had made an effort to prevent war. They agreed to act in concert and announced (October 8) to the Balkan Allies that they would not approve of a war with Turkey at that time. They promised that reforms in the government of European Turkey should be made, but were unwilling that anything should be done to affect the integrity or independence of the Ottoman Empire. In case the Allies should go to war with the protégé of the powers, they would be restrained by the latter from taking any territory in European Turkey. If the powers had been in a position to back up these strong words with concerted action, the threat would have silenced the Allies and peace would have been maintained. But the Allies were aware of the rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Russia in the Balkans, and so were not frightened away from their plan of dividing the Ottoman dominions in Europe.

The Allies were successful in their military

¹¹ The authorities disagree as to the nature of the Balkan Alliance. For a fuller discussion of this subject, see Hayes, II, 527; Holt and Chilton, *European History*, 485; Schurman, *The Balkan Wars*, 34-39; Gibbons, *The New Map of Europe*, 264-66.

operations, and Turkey soon showed a willingness to negotiate for peace. A truce was declared December 3, 1912, and a peace conference was held in London, beginning on December 16. The belligerents, however, could not agree on terms, and hostilities were renewed.

There was a danger that the Balkan trouble would involve other countries and thus bring on a general war, a calamity which the European Governments seemed anxious to avoid. In order to keep the conflict within its original limits, the French premier, M. Poincaré, had tried to induce the powers to announce their own "territorial disinterestedness" in the Balkan quarrel. Such a pledge was opposed by the Triple Alliance, especially Austria-Hungary, who seemed to think that her own interests were being threatened. She was opposed to such changes in the map of Europe as would extend Serbia to the Adriatic and place strong Slavic states between her and Salonica. Serbia had captured Durazzo and insisted on keeping it and a small portion of the Albanian coast. But Austria-Hungary favored the autonomy of Albania and was so determined in her opposition to Serbian ambitions that she began a general mobilization of her military forces.

The expressions of opinion given out by the various governments showed that the Triple

Alliance powers took one side of the controversy and the Triple Entente powers the other, the former being inclined to support Turkey and the latter the Balkan Allies. There was, therefore, a danger that the Balkan quarrel would assume European proportions and thus bring on a world war. This calamity was averted because the powers were on this occasion sane enough to settle their differences of opinion in the spirit of compromise. A conference was held in London in December, 1912, and it was agreed out of deference to the wishes of Austria and Italy that Albania should be an autonomous state and Serbia should have "commercial access to the Adriatic."

Serbia acquiesced in this compromise, but Montenegro gave trouble. The powers in arranging the boundaries of Albania finally decided that they should include Scutari. The Montenegrins were, therefore, ordered to raise the siege of Scutari; but instead of obeying this command, they went on with the siege and succeeded in capturing the city on April 22, 1913. Austria-Hungary and Italy threatened to attack Montenegro if she did not agree to turn over Scutari to Albania. Austria-Hungary's stand aroused great excitement in Russia and war between that country and the Dual Monarchy seemed imminent, when Montenegro wisely yielded and agreed to relinquish her prize (May 3).

A second peace congress was held in May and the belligerents all agreed to the treaty of London (May 30). By this treaty, Turkey gave up all of her territory in Europe except a narrow strip extending from the Black Sea to the *Ægean*, including Constantinople but excluding Adrianople.

Before the treaty with the Porte was signed, the Allies had begun to quarrel over the spoils. Serbia and Bulgaria had agreed by a secret treaty signed in March, 1912, upon a plan for the division of the territory to be taken from the Ottoman Empire. By this scheme Bulgaria was to have most of Macedonia with a seaport on the *Ægean*; and Serbia was to get the greater portion of Albania and a seaport on the Adriatic. The creation of Albania into an independent state had deprived Serbia of a large part of her share, while the war had taken such a turn as to give Bulgaria more than had been contemplated by the treaty. Serbia, therefore, demanded a more equitable division than could be effected by a literal adherence to this agreement. Greece, too, thought that Bulgaria's portion was too large, it being, she contended, three-fifths of all the territory taken from Turkey. She was especially anxious to keep Salonica. The outcome of the dispute was that Bulgaria soon found herself at war with her former allies, Montenegro, Serbia, and Greece.

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Rumania had remained neutral during the first Balkan War and expected compensation to balance the gains of the other states. She was promised Silistria, but was dissatisfied at not having gained more territory. When the second Balkan War broke out, she demanded further compensation from Bulgaria as the price of her neutrality. Bulgaria hesitated to meet her demands, and Rumania joined the list of Bulgaria's enemies. Turkey, too, entered the war and recaptured Adrianople.

Bulgaria soon grew tired of the unequal contest and asked (July 21) the King of Rumania to intercede with the other rulers for peace. A peace conference was held in Bukarest and a treaty was signed (August 10) by all the Christian belligerents. By the treaty of Bukarest Rumania "secured an extension of her southeastern frontier,"¹² and Bulgaria gave up certain territories to Greece and Serbia. Later, by the treaty of Constantinople (September 29), Bulgaria had to give up Adrianople and other territory to Turkey. Turkey now had twice the area in Europe that had been left her by the treaty of London.¹³

The Balkan wars had left a bitterness of feeling behind them which might easily lead to other trouble. Austria was dissatisfied with

¹² *Int. Yr. Bk.*, 1913, 699.

¹³ For map, see Schurman, *The Balkan Wars*, 124.

the final settlement. Serbia had become larger and stronger and was thus able to form a more effective barrier to her ambitions in the direction of the *Ægean*. Besides, her difficulties with her Serbian subjects had been increased as a result of the increased importance of the Serbian state. Then, too, her prestige in the Balkans had been lowered because in both wars she "had backed the wrong horse," her sympathies having been with Turkey in the first war and with Bulgaria in the second. This loss of prestige was especially galling inasmuch as Russia's position in the Balkans had been strengthened by these wars. For Russia had won the gratitude of Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, and even Rumania by the diplomatic support that she had given them. The Austrian Emperor was, therefore, dissatisfied with the Treaty of Bukarest and felt that another war was necessary to right the Balkan situation. His disappointment was so keen that he would probably have gone to war in 1913 if Italy and Germany had not discouraged it.¹⁴ Montenegro, too, felt aggrieved in that Scutari had been wrenched from her and added to Albania.

Serbia had a new cause of complaint against Austria. The creation of the Kingdom of

¹⁴ *World's Work*, June, 1918, p. 171; Dickinson, *The European Anarchy*, 106.

Albania, for which Austria and Italy were responsible, cut her off from the sea and robbed her, as she considered, of the choicest fruits of her victory over Turkey. Then, too, the national aspirations of the Serbians had been greatly increased, because their recent successes had encouraged a new hope that her further territorial ambitions might be realized. Bulgaria felt that the treaty of Bukarest was unfair to her and was hoping for an opportunity to revise it. Besides, the ill feeling of the Bulgars toward the Serbs and Greeks had been intensified.

PART II
THE IMMEDIATE CAUSES OF THE
EUROPEAN WAR

CHAPTER III

THE ASSASSINATION OF FRANCIS FERDINAND

THE year 1914, as has already been shown, found Austria-Hungary and Serbia living on terms that are unsafe for neighbors. Public sentiment was inflamed in both countries and there was a danger that some unusual occurrence would cause an outburst of feeling and bring on war. The event that fanned the smoldering hatred into a flame was the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir-apparent to the throne of Austria-Hungary. The crown prince and his wife were killed on June 28, 1914, at Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, by the explosion of a bomb thrown by two Serbian subjects of Austria-Hungary. "No crime," says the British White Paper, "has ever aroused deeper or more general horror throughout Europe; none has ever been less justified. Sympathy for Austria was universal."¹

The crime owes its significance to the feeling aroused in Austria-Hungary and Serbia by it;

¹ B. W. P., iii.

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to the alleged complicity of the Serbian people and Government in the crime; and to Serbia's inability or refusal to satisfy Austria-Hungary as to reparation and guarantees for the future.

According to Austrian sources, public sentiment in Serbia approved the deed of the assassins. The people rejoiced over it as an act of "revenge for the annexation" and hoped that it would prove to be the initial step in a movement that would ultimately lead to "the detachment from the Dual Monarchy of all territories inhabited by South-Slavs and the eventual destruction of that monarchy as a great power."² Manifestations of joy and exultation were reported from Belgrade,³ Nish,⁴ and Uskub, the populace at the last named place giving "itself up to a spontaneous outburst of passion."⁵

The press of Serbia was also charged with responsibility for "the outrage of Sarajevo," because the public mind had been inflamed by the propaganda conducted by it against Austria in the interest of the "Great Serbian" cause. This propaganda had not been confined to Serbia but had also been carried on, it is alleged, in the Serbian districts of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.⁶ The Austrian Red Book gives extracts from twenty-six Serbian newspapers commenting on the assassination to show the

² A. R. B., 1, 6.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

³ A. R. B., 1.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

attitude of the press toward this crime. These press extracts breathe a very hostile feeling toward Austria, but no one of them attempts to justify the murder.⁷ The statements that come nearest to a justification of this act are the following:

The *Piemont* of July 1 said:

The fact that Princip [one of the assassins] carried out his act of vengeance on the sacred national holiday of Vidovdan [St. Vitus Day], the day fixed for the carrying on of maneuvers, makes the desperate deed of the young martyr appear more intelligible and natural.

[The paper was confiscated by the police because of this article, but the confiscation was annulled on the following day by the Belgrade court of first resort.]

The *Pravada* of July 4 said:

All murders and attacks heretofore committed in Austria have had one and the same origin. The oppressed peoples of the monarchy were obliged to resort to this kind of protest, because no other way was open to them. In the chaos of a reign of terror it is natural and understandable that the era of murderous attacks should become popular.

The *Mali Journal* of July 7 said:

A scion of the Middle Ages was murdered in Sarajevo a few days ago. He was murdered by a boy who felt the suffering of his enslaved fatherland to the point of paroxysms of emotion—the suffering which the despoilers of the lands of his fathers had inflicted upon it. What has official Austria-Hungary done thereafter? It has replied with general mas-

⁷ A. R. B., 19, enclosure 9.

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sacres, plunderings, and destruction of Serb life and property. By such exploits only those who are worthless distinguish themselves. The cowards are always great heroes when they are certain that nothing will happen to them. Only compare Princip and Gabrinovitch with these heroes, and the great difference will be noted at once. Civilization and justice in Austria-Hungary are a great, gross falsehood.

In defense of his Government, M. Pashitch, Prime Minister of Serbia, pointed out that "as soon as news of the crime arrived the Serbian⁸ court and the Government expressed not only their condolence, but also their heartfelt reprobation and their horror at such a crime. All the festivities that were to take place that day in Belgrade were suspended." M. Pashitch further declares that the abhorrence of this unfortunate event was not confined to the governmental circles but was shared by all classes of the people, as the commission of this crime was against the best interests of Serbia.⁹ In a telegram (July 14) to all the royal legations the prime minister said, in part:

Absolute calm rules in Belgrade; no demonstration has taken place this year; nobody has had the intention of provoking any disorder. Not only do the Minister of Austria-Hungary and the members of his

⁸ In quoting from the documents, I have frequently changed "v" to "b" in the spelling of "Serbia" and "Serbian." This liberty has been taken in the interest of uniformity; for the different state papers do not employ the same method in the spelling of these words.

⁹ S. B. B., 30, 8.

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staff walk freely in the city, but no insult either through acts or through words has been offered to any Austro-Hungarian subject, as the newspapers of Vienna claim, and no Austro-Hungarian subject has seen his house attacked or its windows broken; no Austro-Hungarian subject has had any motive to lodge the slightest complaint. All this false news is spread only with the object of disturbing and irritating public opinion in Austria-Hungary against Serbia.¹⁰

Insist on the fact that public opinion in our country is relatively calm and that on our side nobody wishes to provoke or wound Austria-Hungary.¹¹

The Serbian minister at London also called attention to the fact that both the assassins were Austro-Hungarian subjects; that one of them had been suspected by the Serbian authorities who desired to expel him; and that he had been protected by the Austrian authorities who considered him innocent and harmless.¹²

Serbian documents virtually concede that feeling in Austria-Hungary was inflamed by utterances of the Serbian press. On July 1 the Serbian minister at Vienna wrote to his home Government as follows: "I beg you to do what is necessary in order that demonstrations be prevented at home, and that the utterances of the press of Belgrade be restrained as much as possible."¹³

The minister referred to the subject again on July 6 in the following words: "The feeling

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹¹ S. B. B., 20.

¹² B. W. P., 30.

¹³ S. B. B., 9.

against Serbia continues to increase in military and governmental circles, in consequence of articles in our papers which the Austro-Hungarian Legation at Belgrade zealously exploits.”¹⁴

The Serbian officials, however, contended that the hostility of the Serbian press was provoked by the attitude of the Austrian and Hungarian newspapers which “began the polemic” and had for two years “been wounding the Serbs and Serbia in their most delicate sensibilities”; that Austria was intentionally giving undue publicity to the radical utterances of rather irresponsible publications; and that, as the press is free in Serbia, the Government has no means other than the courts to employ in curbing the press, though it has advised the press of Belgrade “to remain calm and limit itself to the denial and the refutation of false and distorted news.”¹⁵

Serbia also brings serious counter-charges against the Austro-Hungarian press. She complains that the newspapers of Vienna and Budapest sent out false news in order to arouse feeling at home and to hold up Serbia in a false light before the nations of the world. They accused Serbia, it is alleged, of the crime of Sarajevo in order to rob her of the good name that she had with the European powers. As an ex-

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁵ S. B. B., 12, 30.

ample of unfair treatment by the news service, the Serbian minister at Vienna cites an account of the assassination given by the Vienna dailies on June 28. These papers, he said, "announced in big type that the two perpetrators of the crime were Serbians, in such a way as to make the people believe that they were meant for Serbians from Serbia."¹⁶

The British White Paper also speaks of the storm of anti-Serbian feeling which swept Austria-Hungary after the Sarajevo murders.

Anti-Serb riots took place at Sarajevo and Agram. The members of the Serb party in the Provincial Council of Croatia were assailed by their colleagues with cries of "Serbian assassins." Mobs in Vienna threatened the Serbian Legation. The Austrian Press, almost without exception, used the most unbridled language, and called for the condign punishment of Serbia. There were signs that the popular resentment was shared and perhaps encouraged by the Austrian Government.¹⁷

Austria-Hungary contends that Serbia could have "averted the serious steps she had reason to expect" from Austria, "if she had spontaneously begun within her own territory proceedings against the Serbian accomplices in the murderous attack of the 28th of June, and [had disclosed] the threads of the plot, leading, as it has been proved, from Belgrade to Sarajevo. Until to-day (July 23), the Serbian Govern-

¹⁶ S. B. B., 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 16.

¹⁷ B. W. P., iii-iv.

ment, in spite of much notorious circumstantial evidence pointing to Belgrade, not only has failed to do anything of that sort, but even has endeavored to efface the existing traces.”¹⁸

In answer to this charge, the Serbian Government says that “Serbia, in the very first days that followed the horrible crime, declared that it condemned the crime and that it was ready to open an inquiry on its territory if the complicity of certain of its subjects was proved during the trial opened by the Austro-Hungarian authorities.”¹⁹ The prime minister also said that the Government had promptly expressed its readiness to hand over to justice any of its subjects “who might be proved to have played a part in the Sarajevo outrage.”

Serbia excuses her failure to take any steps against the accomplices of the murderers on the ground that the Austro-Hungarian Government had “never asked any help whatever of the Serbian Government concerning the matter. It has [had] not asked either an investigation or a trial in the case of any of the accomplices. Once only has [had] it asked for information concerning the present residence of some students expelled from the primary normal school of Pakrac, who had passed over to Serbia to go on with their studies. All the information

¹⁸ A. R. B., 2, 9; B. W. P., 3.

¹⁹ Russian Orange Book, 6; S. B. B., 5; B. W. P., 30.

which could be collected concerning this has been transmitted to the Austro-Hungarian Government.”²⁰

The trial of the assassins brought out evidence which, Austria asserts, proved that the plot to murder the Archduke had been formed in Belgrade; that the “arms and explosives with which the murderers were provided has [had] been given them by Serbian officers”; and that “the passage into Bosnia of the criminals and their arms was organized and carried out by the chiefs of the Serbian frontier service.”²¹ In support of these charges Austria gives extracts from the records of the trial of the assassins. These documents report the confessions of the murderers and these confessions as thus reported confirm the Austrian allegation.²²

²⁰ S. B. B., 5, 30.

²¹ A. R. B., 7.

²² A. R. B., 19, enclosure 8.

CHAPTER IV

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN NOTE TO SERBIA

ON July 23, 1914, Austria-Hungary sent an ultimatum to the Serbian minister for foreign affairs, demanding an answer in forty-eight hours. The Austrian minister was to add verbally that he was instructed to leave Belgrade at the expiration of the "time-limit . . . in the event that within that period" he had not received an "unconditional and favorable response from the Royal Serbian Government."¹

The Entente powers were taken by surprise when they learned the contents of the note. According to the English ambassador at Vienna, the Austro-Hungarian Government had maintained the strictest silence during the time just preceding the delivery of the note at Belgrade, and the representatives of Italy, Russia, and France, as well as himself, were kept in ignorance by the Austro-Hungarian Government as to what demands would be made on Serbia. The Russian ambassador was so completely in the dark as to Austria's plans

¹ A. R. B., 7; R. O. B., 1.

that he had left Vienna about the 20th of July for a two weeks' vacation. The French ambassador on July 22 received from the Austro-Hungarian foreign office the impression that "the note which was being drawn up would be found to contain nothing with which a self-respecting state need hesitate to comply."²

The note addressed to Serbia starts out by reminding Serbia of her promise of March 31, 1909, henceforth to regard the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a *fait accompli* and to renounce her attitude of protest and opposition and "to live in [the] future on good neighborly terms" with Austria-Hungary. This pledge, it is charged, has not been kept; on the contrary, "the history of recent years, and in particular the painful events of the 28th June last, have shown the existence of a subversive movement with the object of detaching a part of the territories of Austria-Hungary from the Monarchy. The movement, which had its birth under the eye of the Serbian Government, has gone so far as to make itself manifest on both sides of the Serbian frontier in the shape of acts of terrorism and a series of outrages and murders. . . .

"The Royal Serbian Government has done nothing to repress these movements. It has permitted the criminal machinations of various

² B. W. P., 161.

societies and associations directed against the Monarchy and has tolerated unrestrained language on the part of the press, the glorification of the perpetrators of outrages, and the participation of officers and functionaries in subversive agitation. It has permitted an unwholesome propaganda in public instruction. In short, it has permitted all manifestations of a nature to incite the Serbian population to hatred of the Monarchy and contempt of its institutions." It is also contended that the confessions of the assassins on trial for the murder of the Archduke prove the complicity of Serbian officials in the crime of Sarajevo.³

The note continues as follows:

This culpable tolerance of the Royal Serbian Government had not ceased at the moment when the events of the 28th June last proved its fatal consequences to the whole world.

It results from the depositions and confessions of the criminal perpetrators of the outrage of the 28th June that the Sarajevo assassinations were planned in Belgrade, that the arms and explosives with which the murderers were provided had been given to them by Serbian officers and functionaries belonging to the Narodna Odbrana, and finally that the passage into Bosnia of the criminals and their arms was organized and carried out by the Chiefs of the Serbian frontier service.

The above mentioned results of the preliminary investigation do not permit the Austro-Hungarian Government to pursue any longer the attitude of ex-

³ See p. 51.

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pectant forbearance which it has maintained for years in the face of machinations hatched in Belgrade, and thence propagated in the territories of the Monarchy. The results, on the contrary, impose upon it the duty of putting an end to the intrigues which form a perpetual menace to the tranquillity of the Monarchy.

To achieve this end, the Imperial and Royal Government finds itself compelled to demand from the Royal Serbian Government a formal assurance that it condemns this dangerous propaganda against the Monarchy—in other words, the whole series of tendencies, the ultimate aim of which is to detach from the Monarchy territories belonging to it—and that it undertakes to suppress by every means at its disposal this criminal and terrorist propaganda.

In order to give a solemn character to this undertaking the Royal Serbian Government shall publish on the front page of its "journal official," of the 26th of July [13th July] the following declaration:

The Royal Government of Serbia condemns the propaganda directed against Austria-Hungary, of which the final aim is to detach from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy territories belonging to it, and it sincerely deplores the fatal consequences of these criminal proceedings.

The Royal Government regrets that Serbian officers and functionaries have participated in the above-mentioned propaganda and thus compromised the good neighborly relations to which the Royal Government was solemnly pledged by its declaration of the 31st of March, 1909.

The Royal Government, which disapproves and repudiates all idea of interfering or attempting to interfere with the destinies of the inhabitants of any part whatsoever of Austria-Hungary, considers it its duty for-

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mally to warn officers and functionaries, and the whole population of the Kingdom, that henceforward it will proceed with the utmost rigor against persons who may be guilty of such machinations, which it will use all its efforts to prevent and suppress.

. This declaration shall simultaneously be communicated to the royal army as an order of the day by His Majesty the King, and published in the Official Bulletin of the army.

The Royal Serbian Government further undertakes:

1. To suppress any publication which incites to hatred and contempt of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the general tendency of which is directed against its territorial integrity;

2. To dissolve immediately the society called Narodna Odbrana, to confiscate all its means of propaganda, and to proceed in the same manner against all other societies and their branches in Serbia which engage in propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The Royal Government shall take the necessary measures to prevent the societies dissolved from continuing their activity under another name and form;

3. To eliminate without delay from public instruction in Serbia, both as regards the teaching body and the methods of instruction, everything that serves, or might serve, to foment the propaganda against Austria-Hungary;

4. To remove from the military service, and from the administration in general, all officers and functionaries guilty of propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy whose names and deeds the Austro-Hungarian Government reserves to itself the right of communicating to the Royal Government;

5. To accept the collaboration in Serbia of representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Government in the suppression of the subversive movement directed against the territorial integrity of the monarchy;

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6. To take judicial proceedings against accessories to the plot of the 28th June who are on Serbian territory. Delegates of the Austro-Hungarian Government will take part in the investigation relating thereto;

7. To proceed without delay to the arrest of Major Voijs Tankositch and of the individual named Milan Ciganovitch, a Serbian State employee, who have been compromised by the results of the magisterial inquiry at Sarajevo;

8. To prevent by effective measures the coöperation of the Serbian authorities in the illicit traffic in arms and explosives across the frontier, to dismiss and punish severely the officials of the frontier service at Schabatz and Loznica guilty of having assisted the perpetrators of the Sarajevo crime by facilitating their passage across the frontier;

9. To furnish the Imperial and Royal Government with explanations regarding the unjustifiable utterances of high Serbian officials, both in Serbia and abroad, who, notwithstanding their official position, did not hesitate after the crime of the 28th June to express themselves in interviews in terms of hostility to the Austro-Hungarian Government; and, finally,

10. To notify the Imperial and Royal Government without delay of the execution of the measures comprised under the preceding heads.

The Austro-Hungarian Government expects the reply of the Royal Government at the latest by 6 o'clock on Saturday evening, the 25th July.

A memorandum dealing with the results of the magisterial inquiry at Sarajevo with regard to the officials mentioned under heads (7) and (8) is attached to this note.⁴

On the same day on which this note was sent to Serbia, the Austro-Hungarian minister for

⁴ A. R. B., 7.

foreign affairs sent instructions to the Austro-Hungarian ambassadors at the various European capitals to bring the contents of the note to the Governments of the powers and at the same time present a statement, prepared by the foreign office, explaining why Austria-Hungary had felt compelled to take such action against Serbia. These ambassadors were also to say that the Austro-Hungarian Government held at the disposal of the powers a dossier "recording the Serbian machinations and showing the connection between these machinations and the murder on the 28th of June."⁵ This dossier was sent to the powers on July 25.⁶ The following is a summary of the document:

There has been going on in Serbia for a long time a propaganda looking to the detachment of the Southern Slav provinces of the Dual Monarchy in order to unite them with Serbia. This movement reached its climax at the time (1908) of the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary. The entire press at that time clamored for war with Austria and "associations were formed in preparation for a struggle." The Narodna Odbrana was the most important of these associations. It was formed as a private organization, but it was dominated by the Government because of the state functionaries on its roll of membership.

⁵ A. R. B., 8.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

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The object of the society was to recruit and equip "bodies of volunteers for the coming war with the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy." The activities of the society were open and were supported by the Government. In this way the "guerilla warfare against Austria-Hungary was organized."

"This period of aggressiveness was terminated by the declaration" of March 31, 1909, when Serbia declared her willingness to acquiesce in the annexation. The movement against Austria now seemed to be at an end. But the "aspirations hostile to the Dual Monarchy remained in operation," and the propaganda against Austria-Hungary continued and grew more active. Secret intrigues were now carried on in the Southern Slav provinces of the Dual Monarchy and Austro-Hungarian subjects were "corrupted to betray their country."

The newspapers were especially active in this work. "They habitually referred to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an act of robbery committed against Serbia and requiring remedy." These sheets "were smuggled into the [Dual] Monarchy through well organized secret channels."

The Narodna Odbrana is the center of this agitation. It preaches to the people that Austria-Hungary is trying to crush Serbia, and is therefore Serbia's greatest enemy. It pledges

its members to preach to the people untiringly and unceasingly "that the waging of a war of extermination against Austria-Hungary . . . is an imperative necessity." There are other societies affiliated with the Narodna Odbrana. They too are dominated by "army officers, professors, and state officials." One of these is the Sokol Society. Its aims nominally are "athletic" as those of the Narodna Odbrana are "cultural," but one of the real aims is the "liberation of the brothers across the Drina." The Narodna Odbrana appeals not only to the subjects of Serbia but to all Southern Slavs. It tries to incite them to the work of destruction of the Dual Monarchy. It also keeps in touch with the "brothers outside of Serbia."

"Princip and Grabez [assassins of the Grand Duke] are types of the youths whose minds had been poisoned in school by the teaching of the Narodna Odbrana." Milan Ciganovitch and Major Voijsa Tankositch [Serbians alleged to have aided the assassins] were leaders of the Narodna Odbrana. The Serbian Government is responsible because it has allowed the hostility of the press and this activity of the associations against another state to go on and has not suppressed the "activities of men holding high positions in the state administration," "who poisoned the national conscience." ⁷

⁷ A. R. B., 19, enclosure.

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Along with this paper were sent documents proving, it was alleged, the claims of the dossier. It is difficult to make extracts from these that would adequately summarize the evidence, and so the reader is referred to the documents themselves.

Before sending the note to Serbia, Austria-Hungary asked the advice of Germany as to what should be done. Germany, according to her own statement, replied as follows:

The Austro-Hungarian Government advised us of this view of the situation and asked our opinion in the matter. We were able to assure our ally most heartily of our agreement with her view of the situation and to assure her that any action that she might consider it necessary to take in order to put an end to the movement in Serbia directed against the existence of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy would receive our approval. We were fully aware in this connection that warlike moves on the part of Austria-Hungary against Serbia would bring Russia into the question and might draw us into a war in accordance with our duty as an ally. However, recognizing the vital interests of Austria-Hungary which were at stake, we could neither advise our ally to a compliance that would have been inconsistent with her dignity, nor could we deny her our support in this great hour of need. We were all the more unable to do this inasmuch as our interests also were seriously threatened as a result of the continuous Serbian agitation. If Serbia, with the help of Russia and France, had been allowed to imperil the existence of the neighboring monarchy any longer, this would lead to the gradual downfall of Austria and would result in submission to Slavic sway under the Russian scepter, thus making

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the position of the Germanic race in Central Europe untenable. A morally weakened Austria breaking down as the result of the advance of Russian Pan-Slavism would no longer be an ally on whom we could count and upon whom we could rely, such as we need in view of the attitude of our eastern and western neighbors, which has constantly grown more threatening. We therefore gave Austria an entirely free hand in her action against Serbia. We have taken no part in the preparations.⁸

The German Government, however, denied all knowledge of the contents of the note until after it was sent.⁹ But this denial has not been fully credited by Germany's opponents. They contend that the German Government knew beforehand just what action Austria would take and could have prevented her from going as far as she did.¹⁰

⁸ G. W. B., S., 772.

⁹ B. W. P., 18, 25.

¹⁰ R. O. B., 18; F. Y. B., 35.

The French minister at Munich in an official communication to the French acting foreign minister (July 23) said: "The [Bavarian] President of the Council said to me to-day that the Austrian note, the contents of which were known to him, was in his opinion drawn up in terms which could be accepted by Serbia."

The *North German Gazette* said (September 21, 1914) that the statement charging the Bavarian Government with foreknowledge of Austria's note to Serbia "has been shown to be an invention by the official Dementi of the Royal Bavarian Government." See F. Y. B., 21; War Chronicle, Dec., 1914, 19.

The British ambassador at Vienna in a dispatch to his Government (July 30) said: "Although I am not able to verify it, I have private information that the German Ambassador [at Vienna] knew the text of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia before it was dispatched and telegraphed it to the German Emperor." B. W. P., 95.

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The question as to whether the German foreign office knew in advance the contents of the Austrian note was a mooted one up until about a year ago, when evidence came to light which corroborates the Allied contention that Germany was responsible for Austria's unreasonable ultimatum to Serbia. A correspondent of the London *Times* declared (July, 1917) that he had learned from a thoroughly reliable source of a conference held at Potsdam July 5, 1914, at which the German Emperor and chancellor, the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister, and others were present. "The meeting discussed and decided upon all the principal points in the Austrian ultimatum which was to be dispatched to Serbia eighteen days later." It was thought probable that "Russia would refuse to submit to such a direct humiliation and that war would result. That consequence the meeting definitely decided to accept." This charge has been flatly denied by the official *North German Gazette*, which declares that no such conference was ever held.

The indictment of the *Times* correspondent, however, is supported by the following convincing evidence:

Hugo Haase, Minority Socialist leader, in a speech made in the Reichstag July, 1917, spoke of "the conferences in Berlin on July 5, 1914," as if they were well-known. (The *Times* cor-

respondent contended that this statement referred to the alleged Potsdam Conference.) Prince Lichnowsky, who was German ambassador at London at the time of the break in August, 1914, makes this statement in his secret memorandum published some months ago: "I learned that at the decisive conference at Potsdam on July 5th the Vienna inquiry received the unqualified assent of all the controlling authorities, with the further suggestion that it would not be a bad thing if war with Russia should result." The German foreign minister in his reply to Prince Lichnowsky does not deny the statement made regarding the conference, but only pleads an alibi for himself.

Still more weighty testimony comes indirectly from a member of the conference, Baron Wangenheim, who was German ambassador at Constantinople at the time. On July 25, 1914, Wangenheim told Marquis Garroni, former Italian ambassador at Constantinople, that he had returned on the previous day from Berlin, where, in obedience to a summons from the Emperor, he had been present at a conference at which war was decided upon. The plan was, he said, for Austria, after an interval of a few weeks, to make such demands on Serbia as the latter could not possibly meet and in consequence of this refusal "war would ensue in forty-eight hours." The report of

this conversation between the German and Italian diplomats has come to us through Mr. Lewis Einstein, who was an attaché of the American embassy in Constantinople in 1915. He says that this account was given to him by Marquis Garroni himself, and that the incident herein described had been publicly referred to in Italy by Signor Barzilai.

But the most damaging evidence of all is that given by Mr. Morgenthau, former American ambassador at Constantinople. It seems that Ambassador Wangenheim was on familiar terms with Mr. Morgenthau, and was inclined at times to give a freer rein to his tongue than comported with ambassadorial discretion. Baron Wangenheim had left "for Berlin soon after the assassination of the Grand Duke" and Mr. Morgenthau afterwards learned from him the cause of his absence. The following is in part an account in our ambassador's own words of which the German baron said in unguarded conversations:

"The Kaiser, he told me, had summoned him to Berlin for an Imperial conference. This meeting took place at Postdam on July 5th. The Kaiser presided; nearly all the ambassadors attended. . . . Moltke, then Chief of Staff, was there, representing the army, and Admiral von Tirpitz spoke for the navy. The great bankers, railroad directors, and the cap-

tains of German industry, all of whom were as necessary to German war preparations as the army itself, also attended.

“Wangenheim now told me that the Kaiser solemnly put the question to each man in turn. Was he ready for war? All replied ‘Yes’ except the financiers. They said that they must have two weeks to sell their foreign securities and to make loans. At that time few people had looked upon the Sarajevo tragedy as something that was likely to cause war. This conference took all precautions that no such suspicion should be aroused. It decided to give the bankers time to readjust their finances for the coming war, and then the several members went quietly back to their work or started on vacations. The Kaiser went to Norway on his yacht, Von Bethmann-Hollweg left for a rest, and Wangenheim returned to Constantinople.

“In telling me about this conference, Wangenheim, of course, admitted that Germany had precipitated the war. . . .

“This Imperial Conference took place July 5th; the Serbian ultimatum was sent on July 22nd. That is just about the two weeks’ interval which the financiers had demanded to complete their plans. All the great stock exchanges of the world show that the German bankers profitably used this interval. Their records disclose that stocks were being sold

in large quantities and that prices declined rapidly. At that time the markets were somewhat puzzled at this movement; Wangenheim's explanation clears up any doubts that may still remain. Germany was changing her securities into cash, for war purposes.¹¹

Even though it disclaimed responsibility for the contents of the note, yet the German foreign office supported Austria-Hungary in the stand that she had taken. Austria could not, it contended, draw back, now that "she had launched that note."¹² Besides, according to the German ambassador at Paris, Germany "approved the point of view of Austria," and now that the bolt was shot, "could only allow herself to be guided by her duties as an ally."¹³ "Unless the Austro-Hungarian Government," said the German chancellor officially, on July 23, "wishes definitely to give up all claim to its position as a great power, there is nothing for it to do but back up its demands on the Serbian Government by strong pressure and, if necessary, by recourse to military measures, in which case the choice of means must be left to it. . . . Considering the conditions, the acts as well as the demands of the Austro-Hungarian

¹¹ *Literary Digest* for September 1, 1917, pp. 18-19; May 4, 1918, p. 23; *World's Work* for June, 1918, pp. 170-171; Inter. Conciliation, No. 127, 323, 364.

¹² B. W. P., 25.

¹³ R. O. B., 19.

Government cannot but be looked upon as justified." These statements taken in connection with the other evidence given leave no room for doubt as to Germany's responsibility for Austria's ultimatum to Serbia.¹⁴

The Serbian prime minister considered that the "claims of Austria-Hungary were such that the government of no independent country could accept them entirely." He hoped, therefore, that England would induce Austria to moderate her demands.¹⁵ Serbia objected to the note not only on account of the unreasonableness of its demands, but also because of the shortness of the time limit. The Crown Prince Alexander, in a telegram to the Czar, on July 24, declared that some of these demands could not be met without changes in legislation, which would require some time. He also asked if Russia would not come to the aid of his country, as the latter might be attacked by Austria as soon as the time limit expired.¹⁶ Russian help had also been solicited on the very day that the Austrian note was presented. Dr. Patchou, Serbian Minister for Foreign Affairs *ad interim*, had on that day asked the help of Russia, stating at the same time to the Russian chargé d'affaires at Belgrade that "no Serbian Government will [would] be able to accept the demands of Austria."¹⁷

¹⁴ B. W. P., annex 1.

¹⁵ S. B. B., 35.

¹⁶ S. B. B., 37; R. O. B., 6.

¹⁷ R. O. B., 1.

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Great Britain and Russia also thought that the terms laid down by Austria-Hungary were unreasonable. Sir Edward Grey said on July 24 that Austria had demanded more than he had ever known one state to ask of another independent state.¹⁸ Russia took a decided stand in opposition to the demands of the ultimatum to Serbia. M. Sazonof, her foreign minister, considered that Austria had decided to make war on Serbia and was using her alleged grievances as a pretext. He expressed himself to this effect to the Austrian ambassador at St. Petersburg, and declared that Serbia would no longer be mistress of her own house if she submitted to the proposed coöperation "of Imperial and Royal [Austro-Hungarian] officials in the suppression of the revolutionary movements."¹⁹

Russia also suggested that the Entente powers unite against the stand that Austria-Hungary had taken against Serbia. On the day (July 24) that the Austrian note was received at St. Petersburg, the Russian minister for foreign affairs had a conference with the British and French ambassadors. At this meeting he stated that Austria-Hungary would never have made such unreasonable demands on Serbia if Germany had not been consulted. He wanted Great Britain and France to declare their will-

¹⁸ B. W. P., 5.

¹⁹ A. R. B., 14.

ingness to support Russia in preventing Austria-Hungary from intervening in the internal affairs of Serbia. The French ambassador declared France's willingness to fulfill her obligations to her ally and urged the English ambassador to promise that his Government would join in a declaration of solidarity. Sir George Buchanan, the English ambassador, declared (and his position was later approved by Sir Edward Grey) that his country could not take a stand that would involve her in war over Serbia, as her interests there were nil, and public sentiment would not sanction a war over Serbia. He received the impression that Russia and France were "determined to make a strong stand even if Britain should refuse to join them."²⁰

M. Sazonof next day renewed the request that England declare her intention to support Russia. Such a declaration, he thought, would prevent war, as Germany, in his opinion, did not want to fight; but unfortunately she was counting on Britain's neutrality, and if the latter did not now take a firm stand beside France and Russia "rivers of blood would flow." M. Sazonof was of the opinion that Austria's action was directed against Russia, and her real aim was to "overthrow the present *status quo* in the Balkans" and establish "her own hege-

²⁰ B. W. P., 6, 24.

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mony there." "Russia could not," he said, "allow Austria to crush Serbia and become the predominant power in the Balkans, and if she feels [felt] secure of the support of France she will [would] face all the risks of war." Despite all this, however, Sir George Buchanan declined to promise for his country a declaration of "solidarity" with France and Russia, but, on the contrary, urged prudence upon the Russian foreign minister. He expressed to him "the earnest hope that Russia would not precipitate war by mobilizing" until Sir Edward Grey had had time to use his "influence in favor of peace," for he thought that if "Russia mobilized, Germany . . . would probably declare war at once." M. Sazonof assured him "that Russia had no aggressive intentions, and she would take no action until it was forced upon her."²¹

This statement regarding her peaceful intentions was a true expression of Russia's attitude, according to the opinion of the French ambassador at St. Petersburg. The Russian Government, he said on July 24, was anxious to preserve peace but would be forced by public sentiment to intervene if Austria should offer violence to Serbia.²²

Germany, as has been seen, supported Austria-Hungary in the position that she had taken.

²¹ B. W. P., 17.

²² F. Y. B., 31, 38.

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Besides, Germany contended that the quarrel between Serbia and Austria-Hungary concerned these two countries alone and that the other nations should not take a hand in it. She was anxious that the dispute be localized, fearing grave consequences in case another power should intervene.²³ England was willing to regard the Austro-Serbian quarrel as of no concern of hers if "it did not lead to trouble between Austria and Russia."²⁴ France, too, according to Austrian sources, was willing that the dispute be localized.²⁵ M. Sazonof, on the other hand, declared that the trouble was not solely a question between Austria and Serbia, but was a matter of concern for all Europe, "inasmuch as the compromise arrived at in consequence of the Serbian declaration in 1909 had been brought about under the auspices of the whole of Europe." As early as July 24 he made it perfectly clear to both the British and Teutonic ambassadors that his Government could not remain indifferent to "any action taken by Austria to humiliate Serbia."²⁶

The shortness of the time limit mentioned in the ultimatum, in the opinion of the Entente powers, made it more difficult to adjust the differences between Austria and Serbia. Such

²³ F. Y. B., 28.

²⁴ B. W. P., 11.

²⁵ A. R. B., 13.

²⁶ A. R. B., 16; B. W. P., 7; G. W. B., annex 4.

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an opinion was expressed by the French ambassador at St. Petersburg on July 24,²⁷ and the time limit was opposed by Sir Edward Grey from the beginning. He thought it a "matter for great regret that a time limit, and such a short one, had been insisted upon" and that "a time limit was generally a thing to be used only in the last resort, after other means had been tried and failed."²⁸

M. Sazonof, acting on the suggestion of the British ambassador at St. Petersburg,²⁹ took the initiative in asking that the time limit be prolonged. On July 24 he telegraphed a request to the Austro-Hungarian Government for an extension of the time limit, giving as a reason the opportunity which would thus be afforded for the powers to examine the data on which Austria-Hungary had based her demands on Serbia. If the powers "found that some of the Austrian requests were well-founded, they would be in a position to advise the Serbian Government accordingly." The Russian Government also asked the courts of

²⁷ F. Y. B., 31.

²⁸ B. W. P., 3, 5.

²⁹ As soon as the Austrian ultimatum reached him, M. Sazonof asked for a conference with the French and British ambassadors. At this meeting (held July 24), the British ambassador declared that the "important point was to induce Austria to extend the time limit." The "French ambassador, however, thought that either Austria had made up her mind to act at once or that she was bluffing," and, therefore, the time was too short to carry out the British ambassador's suggestion. B. W. P., 6.

London, Rome, Berlin, Paris, and Bukarest to support its request. England, France, and Italy instructed their ambassadors at Vienna to join in the effort to secure an extension of the time limit.³⁰

Germany was also invited by Great Britain to coöperate with the other powers in the attempt to secure a prolongation of the time limit. Von Jagow, German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, at once telegraphed to the German ambassador at Vienna instructing him, according to the report of the British ambassador, to "pass on" to the Austro-Hungarian foreign office the request of London.³¹ The French ambassador, however, received the impression that the telegram was "to the effect that he [the German ambassador at Vienna] *should ask* Count Berchtold [Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs] for this extension."³² It is evident, however, that Von Jagow did not enthusiastically support the effort in favor of an extension of the time limit. He expressed (July 25) to the Russian chargé d'affaires at Berlin the opinion that all such "*démarches* were too late," and doubted the wisdom of Austria's "yielding at the last moment," being

³⁰ B. W. P., 13, 40; R. O. B., 4; F. Y. B., 39.

The instructions to the Italian ambassador, however, came too late to be of any practical value.

³¹ B. W. P., 18.

³² F. Y. B., 41.

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“inclined to think that such a step on her part might increase the assurance of Serbia.”³³

Count Berchtold was away from Vienna and so Russia's request did not reach him promptly. On the 25th he replied and declined the request.³⁴

³³ R. O. B., 14; F. Y. B., 43.

³⁴ A. R. B., 20.

CHAPTER V

SERBIA'S REPLY TO AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

THERE was a danger that Austria, not receiving a satisfactory reply from Serbia, might attack the latter, and Europe would thus be confronted with a war before diplomacy had had time to arrange the terms of a settlement. Sir Edward Grey's fears on this score were allayed when the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister explained to him, through the Austro-Hungarian ambassador at London, that the note to Serbia "was not an ultimatum but a *démarche* with a time limit, and that if the Austrian demands were not complied with within the time limit the Austro-Hungarian Government would break off diplomatic relations and begin military preparations, not operations."¹

The German ambassador at London thought that a negative reply from Serbia might mean immediate action by Austria. In order to give the latter power an excuse for postponing action he suggested (July 24) that "a reply favorable on some points" be sent at once by Serbia.²

¹ A. R. B., 17; B. W. P., 14.

² B. W. P., 11.

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This policy was acceptable to the Entente powers, for they were willing to advise Serbia to send a conciliatory reply to Austria. Before the Serbian note was sent, the French foreign minister had expressed the hope that Serbia's answer would be favorable enough to prevent a break with Austria, and, according to the Austrian ambassador at Paris, had advised Serbia to go as far towards meeting Austria-Hungary's demands as she could without compromising her sovereignty.³ The British White Paper says that the Entente powers advised "Serbia to go as far as possible to meet Austria"; and we know that Sir A. Nicholson, British Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on July 23 expressed to the Serbian minister at London the hope that "the Serbian Government would endeavor to meet the Austrian demands in a conciliatory and moderate spirit."⁴ Sir Edward Grey thought (July 24) that Serbia should give satisfaction to Austria if any of her officials had been implicated in the plot. As "for the rest," he said, "[the] Serbian Government must reply to Austrian demands as they consider best in Serbian interests."⁵ The French foreign minister said on

³ B. W. P., 16; A. R. B., 13.

⁴ B. W. P., VI, and No. 30.

⁵ Apparently, this statement was in substance made to the Serbian minister at London July 24. The British minister at Belgrade was instructed on this same day to express this opinion of the British foreign minister to the Serbian Govern-

July 27 that "the powers, particularly Russia, France and England, have by their urgent advice induced Belgrade to yield."⁶

Serbia made her reply to the Austrian note, on July 25, just before the forty-eight hour time limit expired. It was as follows:

The Royal Serbian Government has received the communication of the Imperial and Royal Government of the 10th [23rd] of this month, and it is persuaded that its reply will remove any misunderstanding that threatens to spoil the good relations between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the Kingdom of Serbia.

The Royal Government is conscious that the protests which have been made both in the tribune of the national Skupshtina and in the declarations and acts of the responsible representatives of the State, protests which were cut short by the declaration of the Serbian Government under date of 18-31 March, 1909, have not been renewed in regard to the great neighboring Monarchy on any occasion, and that since this time both on the part of the Royal Governments

ment, but only after he had advised with his Russian and French colleagues. It was too late, now, the Russian foreign minister thought, to make such a representation to the Serbian Government. Besides, he said, Serbia was ready to punish any of her subjects that should be proved guilty of a share in the crime. The British minister at Belgrade consulted his colleagues, but found that they had not received instructions to act with him. Consequently, he had not, up to July 25 (the very day of the Serbian reply), given any advice to the Serbian Government. He thought, however, that the Russian Government had "already urged the utmost moderation on the Serbian Government." It seems, therefore, that Sir Edward Grey's suggestion of July 24 was conveyed from the British, French, and Russian cabinets to the Serbian Government by some channel other than that of the British minister at Belgrade. F. Y. B., 56; B. W. P., 12, 17, 22, 46.

⁶ F. Y. B., 61.

which have succeeded one another and on the part of their agents no attempt has been made with the object of changing the state of affairs, either political or judicial, created in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Royal Government note that in this respect the Imperial and Royal Government has made no representation except as regards a schoolbook, on the subject of which the Imperial and Royal Government received an entirely satisfactory explanation.

Serbia has numerous times given proofs of her pacific and moderate policy during the Balkanic crisis, and it is thanks to Serbia and to the sacrifice she made in the exclusive interest of European peace that this peace was preserved.

The Royal Government cannot be held responsible for manifestations of a private character such as the articles in newspapers and the peaceful work of societies, manifestations which take place in almost all countries as an ordinary thing, and which as a general rule escape official control, all the less that the Royal Government at the time of the solution of the whole series of questions which arose between Serbia and Austria-Hungary has shown a great care and has succeeded in this fashion in settling the greatest number of them to the profit of the progress of the two neighboring countries.

It is for this the Royal Government has been painfully surprised by the affirmations according to which persons in the Kingdom of Serbia had taken part in the preparation of the attentat committed at Sarajevo. It expected to be invited to collaborate in the investigation of everything bearing upon this crime, and it was ready in order to prove by acts its entire correctness, to act against all persons in regard to whom communications should be made to it.

Bowing, then, to the desire of the Imperial and Royal Government, the Royal Government is disposed to hand over to the courts any Serbian subject without regard to his situation or his rank of whose com-

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plicity in the crime of Sarajevo proofs should be furnished.

It undertakes especially to publish on the first page of the official journal under date of 13-26 July the following declaration:

The Royal Government of Serbia condemns all propaganda which might be directed against Austria-Hungary, that is to say, the ensemble of the tendencies which have the ultimate object of detaching from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy territories which form part of it, and it sincerely deplores the dreadful consequences of these criminal actions.

The Royal Government regrets that certain Serbian officers and functionaries should have taken part, according to the communication of the Imperial and Royal Government, in the above-mentioned propaganda and thereby compromised the relations of good neighborliness to which the Royal Government had solemnly pledged itself by its declaration of 18-31 March, 1909.

The Royal Government, which disapproves and repudiates any idea of or attempt at interference in the destinies of the inhabitants of any part of Austria-Hungary whatever, considers it is its duty to formally warn officers, functionaries, and all the population of the kingdom that henceforward it will proceed with the utmost rigor against persons who should render themselves guilty of such actions, which it will use all its efforts to prevent and to repress.

This declaration will be brought to the knowledge of the royal army by an order of the day in the name of his Majesty the King by his Royal Highness the Crown Prince Alexander, and will be published in the next official bulletin of the army.

The Royal Government undertakes further:

(1) To introduce at the first regular session of the Skupshtina a clause in the law dealing with the press

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by which the most severe punishment will fall upon any provocation to hatred and disdain of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy as well as upon any publication whose general tendency would be directed against the territorial integrity of Austria-Hungary.

It undertakes, at the time of revision of the Constitution which is soon to come, to introduce into Article 22 of the Constitution an amendment of such a character that the foregoing publications can be confiscated, which is actually, under the categorical terms of Article 22 of the Constitution, an impossibility.

(2) The Government possesses no proof, and the note of the Imperial Royal Government does not furnish it with any, that the "Narodna Odbrana" society and the other similar societies have committed up to the present any criminal act of this kind by any one of their members. Nevertheless the Royal Government will accept the demand of the Imperial and Royal Government, and will dissolve the Narodna Odbrana society and any other society which should act against Austria-Hungary.

(3) The Serbian Royal Government undertakes to eliminate without delay from the public instruction in Serbia all that serves or could serve to foment a propaganda against Austria-Hungary when the Imperial and Royal Government shall furnish it with the facts and proofs of this propaganda.

(4) The Royal Government similarly accepts to remove from the military service those whom the judicial inquiry shall prove to have been guilty of acts directed against the integrity of the territory of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy; it expects that the Imperial and Royal Government will communicate to it later the names and the acts of these officers and functionaries for the purposes of the procedure which will follow.

(5) The Royal Government must acknowledge that it does not clearly understand the sense and the meaning of the demand of the Imperial and Royal Govern-

ment contending that Serbia should undertake to accept upon its territory the collaboration of the agents [officers] of the Imperial and Royal Government.

But it declares that it will admit any collaboration which would fit in with the principles of international law and the criminal procedure, as well as accord with good neighborly relations.

(6) The Royal Government, it goes without saying, considers it its duty to open an inquiry against all those who are or who, eventually, might have been mixed up in the plot of 15th June, and who should be found on the territory of the kingdom. As for the participation in this inquiry of agents of the Austro-Hungarian authorities who should be delegated to this effect by the Imperial and Royal Government, the Royal Government cannot accept it, for it would be a violation of the Constitution and of the law upon criminal procedure. However, in the concrete cases, communications on the results of the inquiry in question could be given to the Austro-Hungarian agents.

(7) The Royal Government proceeded, on the evening of the receipt of the note, to the arrest of Commander Voija Tankositch. As for Milan Ciganovitch, who is a subject of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and who up to the 15th June was employed as aspirant in the Administration of the Railways, he has not yet been found. The Imperial and Royal Government is requested to be so good as, in the accustomed form, to make known the soonest possible the presumptions of culpability, as well as the eventual proofs of culpability, which have been gathered up to this day by the inquiry at Sarajevo, for the purpose of the ulterior inquiries.

(8) The Serbian Government will strengthen and extend the measures taken to prevent the illegal traffic of arms and explosives across the frontier. It goes without saying that it will order immediately an inquiry and will severely punish the frontier functionaries on the Schabatz-Loznica Line who have been

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derelict in their duty and allowed the authors of the crime of Sarajevo to escape.

(9) The Royal Government will willingly give explanations regarding the statements which its functionaries both in Serbia and abroad have made after the attentat in interviews and which according to the affirmation of the Imperial and Royal Government have been hostile toward the Monarchy, as soon as the Imperial and Royal Government shall have communicated to it the passages in question of these statements and as soon as it shall have demonstrated that the statements employed were in effect made by the said functionaries, although the Royal Government itself will undertake to collect proofs and convictions.

(10) The Royal Government will inform the Imperial and Royal Government of the execution of the measures comprised in the preceding points in so far as that has not already been done by the present note, as soon as each measure shall have been ordered and executed. In case the Imperial and Royal Government should not be satisfied with this reply, the Serbian Royal Government, considering that it is the common interest not to precipitate the solution of this question, is ready as always to accept a pacific understanding by leaving this question either to the decision of the International Tribunal of The Hague, or to the Great Powers which took part in the elaboration of the declarations which the Serbian Government made on the 18-31st March, 1909.⁷

The reply of Serbia went beyond the expectations of the Entente powers "in its moderation and in its desire to afford the fullest satisfaction to Austria."⁸ The French director of the political department thought that its concilia-

⁷ International Conciliation, Pamphlet 84, No. 13.

⁸ B. W. P., 46; R. O. B., 33.

tory attitude would "produce the best impression in Europe,"⁹ and the foreign minister expressed himself as believing that as Serbia had yielded on nearly all points, a little mutual good-will would bring about an agreement.¹⁰ Sir Edward Grey considered that Serbia had subjected herself to the greatest humiliation that he had ever known a country to undergo. He was therefore disappointed when Austria received the note as a flat refusal when she should, in his opinion, have accepted it as a basis for negotiation.¹¹

Serbia's reply was not acceptable to Austria. A comparison of the Serbian and Austrian notes shows that Serbia declined to meet the demand that Austro-Hungarian officials be allowed to participate in the trial of alleged "participants of the conspiracy of June 28th, who are [were] on Serbian territory." As to demand 5, that Austro-Hungarian officials be allowed in Serbia to "coöperate in the suppression of a movement directed against the territorial integrity of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy," Serbia declared her willingness "to accept every coöperation which does not run counter to international law and criminal law, as well as to the friendly and neighborly relations." Austria-Hungary contended that

⁹ R. O. B., 27.

¹⁰ F. Y. B., 75.

¹¹ B. W. P., 46, 48.

on other points, too, the Serbian answer failed to meet the requirements of her note, and that the whole statement was an effort to deceive the powers, as Serbia knew that the promises given would not be kept.¹² The German ambassador at Vienna was of the same opinion.¹³

Austria-Hungary, therefore, broke diplomatic relations at once¹⁴ and notified France, July 27, that she would on the next day take steps to make Serbia give satisfaction.¹⁵ Germany supported Austria in this policy, and believed the latter had a right to "secure full guarantees that Serbia's promises shall [should] be also turned into deeds."¹⁶ According to Russian and French sources, however, the Austrian and German ambassadors at Paris were surprised that the reply had not satisfied the Austrian Government,¹⁷ and Sir Edward Grey stated that the German secretary of state admitted that "there were some things in the Austrian note that Serbia could hardly be expected to accept."¹⁸

¹² A. R. B., 34, enclosure and 39; B. W. P., 48.

¹³ B. W. P., 32.

¹⁴ A. R. B., 24.

¹⁵ F. Y. B., 75.

¹⁶ G. W. B., annex 22; R. O. B., 43.

¹⁷ R. O. B., 27; F. Y. B., 57.

¹⁸ B. W. P., 46.

CHAPTER VI

EFFORTS TO PREVENT WAR

THE danger of a rupture between Austria-Hungary and Serbia became imminent as soon as the former announced her refusal to give the latter a longer time in which to meet her demands. As Europe was divided into two rival groups, each composed of great powers tied together by alliances, a war between Serbia and Austria-Hungary would almost inevitably widen into a general conflict. The great problem, therefore, that confronted European diplomacy was to settle the Austro-Serbian quarrel without war or, if this could not be done, to prevent this local quarrel from widening into a European conflict.

Two solutions were proposed. One was to allow Austria to punish Serbia but to prevent the trouble from spreading to other countries. The other was to settle the difficulty without a war between Serbia and Austria. A great war could therefore be avoided if the Austro-Serbian conflict could be either localized or pre-

vented. Germany was the champion of "localization,"¹ Russia of prevention² of war.

The difficulties of this problem were greater than were those raised by the annexation (1908) of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary. Now, as then, both Russia and Serbia were in violent opposition to the policy of the Dual Monarchy. Now, as then, the friends of Russia, France and Great Britain, were not sufficiently interested to go to war solely over an Austro-Serbian quarrel. Then Russia and Serbia were finally induced to yield to Austria-Hungary. Both Serbia and Russia, however, considered that their grievance now against the Habsburg Government was greater than it had been on the former occasion; for if the Austrian demands were met in their entirety the independence of Serbia would, in their opinion, unquestionably be compromised. Besides, Russia, at the time of the annexation crisis, did not feel that she had the military strength to risk a war with Germany and Austria; now she was more hopeful as to the state of her military preparedness. In 1908-9 there was plenty of time for negotiations; now there were only a few days in which to settle the quarrel.

These difficulties would have taxed the diplo-

¹ G. W. B., *annex*, 1 and 13; B. W. P., 9, 46; R. O. B., 18.

² F. Y. B., 83; B. W. P., 56.

matic skill of a Bismarck or a Talleyrand; but Europe at this time could not point to any great names in the list of her official diplomats. In fact, the inefficiency exhibited by European diplomacy during this great crisis is one of the most unfortunate circumstances connected with the entire war. The diplomats, however, took up the task before them and worked energetically at the problems confronting them. Efforts to prevent war were made both before and after Serbia's reply to the Austrian ultimatum was delivered.

Germany's plan for solving the problem was to induce Russia to stand aside and allow Austria-Hungary and Serbia to settle their own quarrel.³ If Serbia were unsupported by a great power she would, of course, have to yield and there would be no war. Germany, therefore, early in the dispute, made an effort to secure the neutrality of Russia toward a possible conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. Before Austria had sent her note to Serbia, the German ambassador at London had asked Sir Edward Grey to exercise a "moderating influence at St. Petersburg." After the note was sent, Sir Edward Grey in a conversation with the German ambassador said (July 24) that, "in view of the extraordinarily stiff character of the Austrian note, the shortness of the time

³ G. W. B., annex 13.

allowed, and the wide scope of the demands upon Serbia," he "felt quite helpless as far as Russia was concerned," and he "did not believe any power could exercise influence alone."⁴

Later (July 26) Germany asked that France unite with her in trying to influence Russia to moderation. France regarded this proposal as an effort to separate her from her ally and compromise her in the eyes of Russia. The same effort was made by Germany in London on or before July 27. Paris and London replied that Russia had "given proof of the greatest moderation, especially in urging upon Serbia to accept all that was possible of the Serbian note." According to these Governments, the lack of moderation had been shown by Vienna and it was there that action should be taken. After this rebuff, Germany apparently gave up "the idea of pressure upon Russia only" and inclined rather "toward mediatory action both at St. Petersburg and at Vienna."⁵

Sir Edward Grey was in favor of the joint "mediation of the four Powers . . . in the Serbian question, namely, England, France, Italy, and Germany, this mediation to be exercised simultaneously at Vienna and at St. Peters-

⁴ B. W. P., 10, 11.

⁵ F. Y. B., 56; B. W. P., 46; R. O. B., 35, 53.

burg." We find him and the French ambassador at London on July 24 agreeing that it would be wise for the English cabinet to ask Germany to take the initiative in an effort at mediation between Austria and Serbia. Sir Edward Grey expressed at this time "his desire to leave no stone unturned to avert the crisis."⁶ The policy of joint mediation was approved by Russia and Italy, and the French foreign minister declared his willingness to co-operate in any conciliatory action at Vienna."⁷ Germany, however, was opposed to intervention between Austria and Serbia, but Herr von Jagow, German foreign minister, said (July 25) that he was ready to join in with Sir Edward Grey's plan of mediation "if the relations between Austria and Russia became threatening."⁸

As Austria had broken off relations with Serbia, these two powers were now on the verge of war and if this calamity were to be avoided either the former must modify her demands or the latter must grant them unqualifiedly. Italy was the only power that seemed to make a serious effort to induce Serbia to comply with Aus-

⁶ F. Y. B., 32, 34.

⁷ The Russian foreign minister said (July 25) that "if Serbia should appeal to the Powers, Russia would be quite ready to stand aside and leave the question in the hands of England, France, Germany, and Italy."

B. W. P., 17, 35; F. Y. B., 34.

⁸ B. W. P., 18; G. W. B., annex 13.

tria's demands. The Italian minister for foreign affairs expressed the opinion on July 27 that it would have been wiser if Serbia had accepted Austria-Hungary's terms in their entirety. He was satisfied that Austria-Hungary would not agree to modify these terms, and he doubted if Germany would urge her to do so. The wise thing, therefore, was for Serbia to yield. Austria-Hungary, he thought, would be satisfied if Serbia would now agree to comply with the provisions of the Austrian note. Serbia could save her dignity by accepting the note under the advice of the four powers. She could then say that she had yielded at the suggestion of Europe rather than at the behest of Austria-Hungary.⁹

The Serbian chargé d'affaires at Rome expressed the opinion that if Austria would explain articles 5 and 6 of her note, "Serbia might still accept the whole note." It was not expected that Austria-Hungary would make these explanations to Serbia, but she might give them to the "powers engaged in discussions, who might then advise Serbia to accept without conditions." The Italian foreign minister requested the English ambassador at Rome to report this information to his Government. The former was very anxious that a discussion of this phase of the question should be undertaken at once, and seemed to want England to ap-

⁹ F. Y. B., 72; B. W. P., 57.

proach Austria-Hungary on the subject, though there is no clear statement of such a wish.¹⁰ Sir Edward Grey's reply to this proposal was that he would not take up the question with Austria-Hungary as that power had shown an unwillingness to "accept any discussion on basis of Serbian note."¹¹ The British foreign minister did, however, present Italy's plan to the German ambassador, but made no proposal of his own.¹²

The Russian foreign minister had declared (July 26) that certain of the demands made by Austria-Hungary could not be met by Serbia without changing her laws and also incurring the risk of exciting mob violence against the Government.¹³ Three days later, after she had ordered partial mobilization and war between herself and Austria seemed imminent, Russia showed great anxiety to avoid a conflict. At that time Sir George Buchanan, English ambassador at St. Petersburg, asked the Russian foreign minister if he would object to the suggestion of Italy that Serbia promise the powers to meet fully the demands of Austria-Hungary. His reply was that "he would agree to anything arranged by the Four Powers, provided it was acceptable to Serbia"—that he was not "more Serbian than Serbia."¹⁴

¹⁰ B. W. P., 64.

¹¹ B. W. P., 81.

¹² B. W. P., 90.

¹³ R. O. B., 25.

¹⁴ B. W. P., 78.

The published correspondence of the various Governments does not show that the negotiations along this line proceeded any further, nor does it explain why they ceased at this point. It is charged that Austria did not expect nor want Serbia to accept her proposals. The Serbian ambassador at Vienna considered, he says, on July 24 that war with Austria was inevitable, even if Serbia should accede to all of Austria's demands.¹⁵ The French ambassador at Vienna thought that the military party in Austria did not want Serbia to yield.¹⁶ On July 27, the British ambassador expressed the opinion that the Austro-Hungarian Government was anxious for war with Serbia and the Austro-Hungarian note had been "so drawn up as to make war inevitable."¹⁷ Germany, too, according to a Russian source, did not want the breach between Serbia and Austria to be healed. The Russian chargé d'affaires at Berlin contended that up until July 28 the Wolf Bureau had not published the contents of the Serbian note, for fear that it would have a conciliatory effect on the people.¹⁸

Two plans for the prevention of war had now failed, but there was left the possibility of inducing Austria-Hungary "either to approve the response from Belgrade or else to accept it as a basis for discussions." To bring about one of

¹⁵ S. B. B., 52.

¹⁶ F. Y. B., 27.

¹⁷ B. W. P., 41.

¹⁸ R. O. B., 46.

these results was the aim of Sir Edward Grey. At first his efforts seem to have been directed toward the former objective and later toward the latter.¹⁹

The Entente Governments felt that Germany was the only power that could influence Austria to abate her demands. The "key of the situation," according to M. Sazonof, Russian foreign minister, "was in Berlin." The first important move would have to be made by Germany. So on July 25 Sir Edward Grey expressed to the German ambassador at London the hope that his Government would "be able to influence the Austrian Government to take a favorable view" of the Serbian note, if it should prove to be as conciliatory as the forecast of it indicated. The German foreign office "passed on" the desire of Britain, but, according to her contention, apparently made no effort to influence Austria-Hungary to adopt the suggestion. Germany gave as a reason for her hesitancy in pressing Austria the danger that Austria would come out with a *fait accompli*. On July 29 the secretary of state for foreign affairs seemed distressed and said that Austria-Hungary had done what he feared. He also felt that by passing on England's suggestion he had hastened a declaration of war.²⁰

¹⁹ A. R. B., 29, 38, 43.

²⁰ B. W. P., vi; 25, 27, 34, 54, 76; G. W. B., annex 15; A. R. B., 43, 44.

Sir Edward Grey's other plan was that Russia and Austria-Hungary agree to abstain from military operations until the four powers not directly concerned—Italy, Great Britain, France, and Germany—could arrange a satisfactory agreement. The ambassadors representing those four Governments at London should keep in touch with each other and by their joint efforts try to work over the Serbian concessions and change them into terms that would be acceptable to both sides. A proposal to this effect was made by him July 26, and the other three powers were invited to take part in the conference.²¹ France,²² Italy, and Russia²³ agreed to the plan.

Germany, while opposed to mediation between Austria and Serbia, said that she accepted the principle of mediation between Austria-Hungary and Russia, but was opposed to the conference proposed by Grey on the ground that it would be a court of arbitration and could not be called except at the request of these two powers. Besides, she favored a direct inter-

The German under-secretary of state was of the opinion that his Government, by merely submitting to Austria-Hungary the British proposal, gave it a qualified endorsement. B. W. P., 34.

²¹ A. R. B., 38, 41; B. W. P., 36.

²² F. Y. B., 70.

²³ B. W. P., 49, 55.

The Russian foreign minister said that "he was perfectly ready to stand aside if the Powers accepted the proposal for a conference."

change of views between Austria and Russia, and thought that nothing else should be done until the result of these negotiations was known. The British ambassador at Berlin explained that Sir Edward Grey's plan did not contemplate a court of arbitration but only an informal discussion as to what could be done, no suggestion to be considered that had not previously been consented to by Austria-Hungary and Russia.²⁴ The French ambassador at Berlin expressed his regret at Germany's refusal. He said that Sir Edward Grey's plan went beyond the question of form—the main point in his plan was the coöperation of the four powers in the interest of peace; that this coöperation could take place in the form of “common *démarches* at Vienna and at St. Petersburg.”²⁵ Austria, however, declined the proposal and Sir Edward Grey agreed that direct negotiations between Austria and Russia were preferable to his plan of a conference, if a direct interchange of views between Vienna and St. Petersburg could be effected.²⁶ The

²⁴ G. W. B., annexes 12 and 13; B. W. P., 43, 46, 67.

The reason afterwards given by Von Jagow, German Secretary of State, for his opposition to Sir Edward Grey's proposal was that the Teutonic powers would probably have suffered a diplomatic defeat in a European conference at that time. For Italy, because of her sympathy with Serbia and her rivalry with Austria, would have opposed her allies in the conference. Lichnowsky Memorandum, Inter. Conciliation, No. 127, p. 363.

²⁵ F. Y. B., 74.

²⁶ B. W. P., 67; G. W. B., S., 775.

plan of a conference, therefore, fell into abeyance for the time being, the powers awaiting the outcome of the direct negotiations, which had already been started.

Russia had taken the initiative in opening these negotiations. In an interview (July 26) with the Austro-Hungarian ambassador at St. Petersburg, M. Sazonof, the Russian foreign minister, suggested an exchange of views between the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Governments "in order to redraft certain articles of the Austrian note." "This method of procedure would perhaps enable us [the two Governments] to find a formula which would prove acceptable to Serbia, while giving satisfaction to Austria in respect to the chief of her demands." He asked at this time that Austria-Hungary take back her ultimatum to Serbia and modify her terms, and promised that he would guarantee the result.²⁷ M. Sazonof at first was hopeful as to the result of these pourparlers; and this first meeting between him and Count Szapary had, according to English sources, made a good impression at Vienna.²⁸ The Russian ambassador at Berlin (July 27) asked Von Jagow, the German secretary of state, to persuade the Austro-Hungarian Government to accept Russia's proposal to negotiate with reference to the Serbian question. Von

²⁷ R. O. B., 25; F. Y. B., 54. ²⁸ F. Y. B., 80.

Jagow's attitude was one of acquiescence in the plan, but he declined to advise Austria-Hungary to yield, even though the ambassador urged him to take a more decided stand in favor of the proposal.²⁹

This plan, however, failed, for Count Berchtold, Austro-Hungarian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, told the Russian minister at Vienna (July 28) that Austria could not withdraw from the position that she had taken nor could she "enter upon any discussion of the terms of the Austro-Hungarian note."³⁰

The proposal for the mediation of the four powers was also rejected by Austria-Hungary. She declared war on Serbia July 28,³¹ and next day made a formal statement as to her reasons for so doing. The Serbian Government, she said, had "proceeded to the mobilization of the Serbian forces before it replied to our [her] note, and subsequently has [had] allowed three days to elapse without showing any disposition to modify its point of view." The Austro-Hungarian minister had also previously charged Serbia with having attacked Austrian frontier guards on July 27.³²

The efforts to prevent war had failed, but all negotiations between Russia and Austria were not at an end. Russia had partially mobilized

²⁹ R. O. B., 38.

³⁰ R. O. B., 45.

³¹ A. R. B., 37.

³² A. R. B., 41, 44.

but was still anxious to come to an agreement with Austria. Both the Russian foreign minister and the German ambassador at St. Petersburg favored an "interchange of views between Austria-Hungary and Russia." M. Sazonof also thought well of Sir Edward Grey's plan of a conference of the four powers. Both plans for peace could, in his judgment, be wisely prosecuted simultaneously.³³

The war that soon widened into a world conflict had now begun. The powers that started the flame are responsible for the world conflagration. This responsibility cannot by any possibility be placed at the doors of France, Russia, or England. Prince Lichnowsky is right in the opinion that if the Entente Governments had wanted war they could have gotten it by suggesting to Serbia that she refuse to yield to Austria-Hungary. Such an intimation would have caused Serbia to refuse to accept the Austrian demands to the extent that she did and war would have been certain. The cause of this Balkan war was Austria's unreasonable ultimatum to Serbia and her refusal to accept any satisfaction that would not reduce the little state to a condition of vassalage. Germany, by her own admission, shared equally with Austria the responsibility for the latter's unreasonable demands on Serbia.

³³ R. O. B., 49; B. W. P., 118.

Therefore, Germany and Austria must unquestionably bear the blame for the Austro-Serbian war. This fact alone would fix upon them the main responsibility for the European war. For a Balkan war is always liable to bring on a general conflict and the danger was particularly great in 1914, owing to the tangled condition of European relations at that time.

We cannot at this time say with absolute certainty whether the Teutonic powers wanted a war with Russia in 1914 or preferred to make a successful stroke in the Balkans at small cost. Some evidence points to the former theory and some to the latter. Prince Lichnowsky, for example, in one place represents the German foreign office as assuming that Russia was not able to strike and therefore that the Central powers could get away with the Balkan loot without being chased. In another place, however, he speaks as if Wilhelmstrasse felt that the sooner the Teutons and the Russians had it out the better it would be for the former. One thing, however, is certain—that the Central powers were willing to take a chance on starting a general war rather than forego their designs on Serbia. Now, a nation that would risk a universal conflict at a time like that is guilty of the results that follow, even though it did not desire them. If the Teutonic Governments really thought that they could bluff Rus-

sia into acquiescence in their Balkan policy, this belief would, to a slight degree, extenuate, though by no means excuse, the guilt of the crime.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Lichnowsky Mem. Inter. Conciliation, No. 127, pp. 325, 341, 327.

CHAPTER VII

EFFORTS TO ISOLATE THE WAR

THE effort to prevent war having failed, the policy of "isolation" now offered the only hope for peace. Efforts in this direction had already been made. These had no chance of success unless Russia could be induced to stand aside and acquiesce in the punishment of Serbia, or Austria-Hungary could be persuaded to stop hostilities against Serbia and moderate her demands. Therefore, the great problem still was how to bring Austria-Hungary and Russia to an agreement.

Despite Russia's determination to stand by her protégé, there was still a possibility that the war between Austria and Serbia would not drag in the other European nations. Both Russia and the Teutonic powers seemed anxious to avoid a general war. The German chancellor said, as late as the evening of July 29, that he was still " 'pressing the button' as hard as he could" at Vienna.¹ The French minister at St. Petersburg more than once spoke of the anxiety

¹ B. W. P., 71, 97, 107.

of the Russian Government for peace.² According to the British White Paper, Russia wanted a period of peace to develop her internal resources.³ It is true that the Russian ambassador at Vienna had declared officially (July 27) to the Austro-Hungarian Government that in case war broke out between the Dual Monarchy and Serbia "it would be impossible to localize it, for Russia was not prepared to give way again, as she had done on previous occasions."⁴ The Teutonic authorities, however, seemed to think that Russia would not go to war at this time. She was having revolutionary troubles at home, and her military preparedness, it was thought, was not adequate, despite assurances to the contrary given out by the Russian Government.⁵ Britain and France had no interest in the Austro-Serbian dispute unless it grew into a Russo-Austrian quarrel.⁶

The German Emperor felt that Russia ought not to interfere with Austria's purpose to chastise Serbia. His position was that the trouble between Serbia and Austria-Hungary was local and that the latter was justified in securing such guarantees as would force Serbia to turn her promises into deeds. Inasmuch as

² F. Y. B., 31, 38, 54.

³ B. W. P., viii.

⁴ B. W. P., 56.

⁵ B. G. B. (2), 12; B. W. P., 32; F. Y. B., 96.

⁶ B. W. P., 48; A. R. B., 38.

Austria-Hungary had promised to annex no territory from Serbia, Russia could afford to stand aside as a disinterested spectator.⁷

Russia, however, took an entirely different view of her obligations to Serbia. Both sentimental and political considerations urged her to protect Serbia. Public sentiment, therefore, would not allow the Government to stand aside and see the little Slavic state humiliated. The feeling in Russia was that Russians could not desert their brethren in Serbia.⁸ Besides, the Russian Government felt that the real cause of the trouble was Austria's desire to be supreme in the Balkan peninsula. If Russia allowed Serbia's independence to be compromised, she considered that she would lose her position in the Balkans, and the hegemony of these states would in the future belong to Austria-Hungary. Therefore, she had, as has been seen, announced in the very beginning that if France would support her, she would intervene in case Serbia were attacked.⁹ It seems that Austria-Hungary, too, felt that her future with reference to the Balkan states was at stake, for Count Mensdorff, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador at London, told Sir Edward Grey on July 29 that "Serbia had always been consid-

⁷ G. W. B., annex 22.

⁸ *Ibid.*, annex 18.

⁹ F. Y. B., 103; B. W. P., 17; R. O. B., 10; G. W. B., annex 4.

ered as being in the Austrian sphere of influence" prior to the Balkan War.¹⁰

Austria's promise to respect the integrity of Serbia did not satisfy Russia, even though it was afterwards ratified by Germany.¹¹ Besides, this promise was later (July 27) conditioned on the localization of the war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. There was a danger, as England pointed out, that public sentiment in Austria might make it impossible for the Austro-Hungarian Government to redeem its pledge.¹² Russia, however, insisted on the maintenance of the independence as well as the integrity of Serbia and she contended that the enforcement of Austria's demands would reduce the little state to a condition of vassalage under the Dual Monarchy. This would disturb the equilibrium in the Balkans and would thus touch Russia's interests. Therefore, the Russian Government could not, in the opinion of M. Sazonof, afford to allow Serbian independence to be jeopardized.¹³

Austria-Hungary declared (July 30) that she had repeatedly promised to respect the sovereignty of Serbia and accused the Russian Government of having suppressed information regarding these assurances. This charge was

¹⁰ B. W. P., 91.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 97.

¹² A. R. B., 32; B. W. P., vi-vii.

¹³ A. R. B., 47; B. W. P., 55, 90, 97, 111.

emphatically denied by the Russian ambassador at Paris.¹⁴ In support of Austria's contention regarding her promises as to the independence of Serbia, we have the following evidence: Count Berchtold, Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, instructed the Austro-Hungarian ambassador at St. Petersburg (July 25) to inform M. Sazonof, the Russian foreign minister, that clause 5 of the Austrian note was "not intended as an infringement on Serbia's sovereignty."¹⁵ The Austro-Hungarian ambassador stated (July 29) to M. Sazonof that his Government had no intention to violate the sovereignty of Serbia. The British ambassador at Vienna stated (July 29) that Austria had declared in St. Petersburg that she had no desire to destroy the independence of Serbia.¹⁶

These promises, however, rested for their fulfillment only on the good faith of Austria-Hungary, as the guarantee of her ally, Germany, did not cover the independence of Serbia. Russia's fears were not allayed by these declarations; for her foreign minister considered that the Dual Monarchy was already trying to compromise the sovereignty of Serbia by insisting on the enforcement of its demands.¹⁷ On July 28 he told the English ambassador at St.

¹⁴ A. R. B., 50; R. O. B., 75.

¹⁵ A. R. B., 27.

¹⁶ A. R. B., 47; B. W. P., 79.

¹⁷ A. R. B., 47.

Petersburg that Russia would not be satisfied with any assurances that Austria-Hungary might give as to the integrity and independence of Serbia if Serbia should be invaded.¹⁸

The Italian ambassador at Vienna thought (July 29) that if Austria-Hungary would convert into a binding engagement the declaration that she had made, promising not to destroy the independence or integrity of Serbia, "Russia might be induced to remain quiet."¹⁹ Two days later, Sir Edward Grey suggested that, as Russian distrust of Austria's assurances as to the integrity and independence of Serbia and Austrian distrust of Serbian promises had been a bar to an agreement, the powers should offer to guarantee to Austria that she should receive full satisfaction from Serbia and to guarantee to Russia that Austria would not interfere with the integrity and independence of Serbia. Sir Edward Grey's proposal carried with it the provision that Germany would sound Austria-Hungary as to her agreement with such a plan and he would sound Russia. The plan was presented to the German secretary of state on July 31, after the German demand for demobilization had been sent to Russia. He expressed sympathy with the idea but declared that his Government could not

¹⁸ B. W. P., 72; A. R. B., 55.

¹⁹ B. W. P., 79.

consider any proposal until after it had heard from Russia.²⁰

In the meantime other efforts at mediation had been made. On July 29 the French ambassador at Berlin suggested that after Austria had entered Serbia and chastised her and thus satisfied her own military prestige, the moment might then be favorable for mediation of the four powers. The German under-secretary of state seemed to think the idea worthy of consideration and thought it a very different proposition from the plan of a conference offered by Sir Edward Grey.²¹

M. Sazonof, the Russian foreign minister, on that same day asked Sir Edward Grey to renew his proposal of the conference and to endeavor to induce Germany's cöoperation. This request came at a time when Russia was "mobilizing partially in her southern provinces,"²² and Austro-Hungarian troops were bombarding Belgrade. As Germany had on July 28 (received July 29) given England assurances that she was trying to mediate at Vienna and St. Petersburg,²³ Sir Edward Grey on the 29th took up with the German ambassador, in accordance with the wish of the Russian Government, the question of renewing the plan of joint media-

²⁰ B. W. P., 111, 121.

²¹ B. W. P., 76.

²² B. W. P., 70, 78; also vi-vii.

²³ B. W. P., 71.

tion. He asked the German Government to suggest a plan of mediation that would be acceptable to it, inasmuch as it had objected to the conference previously proposed by him on the ground that it was too formal. "Mediation was ready," he said, "to come into operation by any method that Germany thought possible if only Germany would 'press the button' in the interests of peace."

Sazonof's offer of mediation was conditioned on a suspension of hostilities against Serbia by Austria; otherwise, he said, "mediation would only allow matters to drag on and give Austria time to crush Serbia." Sir Edward Grey thought that it was now "too late for all military operations against Serbia to be suspended"; but he wanted Austria to promise that after she had taken Belgrade her armies would not advance farther pending the mediation of the powers. It was understood, however, that Austria-Hungary was to hold the territory occupied until she "had complete satisfaction from Serbia."²⁴

The German Government promised (July 30) to endeavor to influence Austria-Hungary to accept mediation on the terms laid down by the British foreign office, and the chancellor said that on the evening of that day he begged Austria to reply to Sir Edward Grey's proposal.

²⁴ B. W. P., 70, 78, 84, 88.

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As yet Austria-Hungary had made no reply, but her foreign minister promised to take the wishes of the Emperor next morning (July 31).²⁵

On this same July 30 there occurred at 2 A. M. a memorable meeting between M. Sazonof, the Russian foreign minister, and the German ambassador at St. Petersburg. When the German ambassador saw that Russia's determination was unshaken and that war was inevitable, he "completely broke down." "He appealed to M. Sazonof to make some suggestion which he could telegraph to German Government as a last hope. M. Sazonof accordingly drew up and handed to German ambassador a formula in French, of which following is translation: 'If Austria recognizing that her conflict with Serbia has assumed character of question of European interest, declares herself ready to eliminate from her ultimatum points which violate principle of sovereignty of Serbia, Russia engages to stop all military preparations.' "

At Great Britain's request, Russia agreed to modify her offer, leaving it to the powers to decide what satisfaction Serbia would give Austria without compromising her independence.²⁷

²⁵ B. W. P., 98, 100, 103, 112.

²⁶ B. W. P., 97.

²⁷ B. W. P., 103, 120.

On July 29 Austria-Hungary, acting on the advice of Germany, renewed negotiations with Russia ²⁸ and two days later she announced her willingness, despite the change in the situation due to Russian mobilization, to consider Sir Edward Grey's proposition to mediate between herself and Serbia. The conditions laid down by the foreign minister were as follows:

Our acceptance, however, is subject to the condition that our military action against Serbia shall nevertheless proceed and that the British Cabinet shall induce the Russian Government to stop the mobilization directed against us. It is understood that in this case we would at once cancel our defensive military counter-measures in Galicia, which had been forced upon us by Russia's mobilization.²⁹

²⁸ B. W. P., 110, 96; A. R. B., 47, 49; G. W. B., S., 777.

²⁹ A. R. B., 51.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WAR AREA BROADENS

HOPES of peace were now aroused. These, however, were soon dashed to the ground, for Germany, at this time, July 31, sent an ultimatum to Russia, demanding the cessation of her mobilization within twelve hours.¹ No reply being received, Germany began to mobilize, and on August 1 war on Russia was declared by Germany.² All hope of a peaceful settlement of the dispute now ended. Germany charges that Russian mobilization was the cause of this final failure of the efforts for peace.³ The Entente powers, on the other hand, blame it on the German ultimatum. They claim that it was entirely unnecessary, as the Russo-British plan for mediation provided for a general suspension of hostilities.

Inasmuch as Russian mobilization figures as an important cause of the war, it is necessary to give in brief the steps that led to Russian and German mobilization. On July 26 Ger-

¹ R. O. B., 76.

² R. O. B., 70; B. W. P., 117; G. W. B., 24, 25.

³ G. W. B., S., I, 779.

many heard through her military attaché at St. Petersburg that Russia had begun mobilization. In consequence of this report, the German Government declared to the Russian Government that "preparatory military measures by Russia" would force Germany to mobilize against both Russia and France, inasmuch as Germany knew of France's obligations to Russia.⁴ Germany was assured by Russia on the 27th that mobilization had not begun, though preparations for it had been made. It was stated, however, that mobilization against Austria-Hungary would begin if Serbia's frontier was crossed, but that under no circumstances would it extend to the districts next to Germany's frontier. A like statement was made to Austria-Hungary July 28.⁵

After Austria-Hungary had declared war on Serbia, Russia (July 29) announced her decision to mobilize in the four southern districts near Austria-Hungary. At the same time she declared that her military movements were not directed against Germany, nor was there any aggressive action intended against Austria-Hungary. Russia had no intention to make a sudden attack on Austria-Hungary, but her troops would be kept under arms to be ready in case her interests in the Balkans were menaced.

⁴ G. W. B., exhibit 7; also S., 774.

⁵ G. W. B., exhibit 11; A. R. B., 42.

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Such measures had to be taken by her, she contended, inasmuch as Austria could mobilize more quickly than she could and already had the start of her.⁶

Several reasons for this action were given by Russia. She was offended because Austria had completely ignored her in the Serbian dispute. Other reasons were that Austria had gone to war with Serbia and had mobilized more extensively than this war warranted, giving rise to the impression that these movements were directed against Russia. She declared that Austria had already mobilized half of her army, and that this mobilization was proceeding on the Russian frontier, according to information received by the Russian ambassador at Berlin. Then, too, Austria-Hungary had declined to continue the conversations that had been going on between the two powers.⁷ Austria-Hungary, however, contended that she had not mobilized against Russia but only against Serbia, but would now have to mobilize against Russia, not as a hostile act, but as a response to Russia's mobilization. She, therefore, ordered a general mobilization on July 31.⁸

When Germany learned that Russia had partially mobilized, she notified the latter power

⁶ R. O. B., 49; A. R. B., 47.

⁷ B. W. P., 95; F. Y. B., 95; R. O. B., 51, 77; A. R. B., 47.

⁸ A. R. B., 50, 52.

that if she did not cease her military preparations, she [Germany] would order mobilization.

Russia felt that she could not accede to this demand, and, therefore, had no alternative but to hasten military preparations and consider that war was inevitable. On July 31 Russia ordered a general mobilization. The Emperor of Germany was, however, assured by Czar Nicholas that "his troops would not move so long as mediation negotiations continued." The reason alleged for this action was that Austria had determined not to yield to the intervention of the powers and was moving troops against Russia as well as Serbia, or, in other words, had begun general mobilization. Besides, she had reason to believe that Germany was making active military preparations and Russia could not afford to let her get the start.⁹ Sazonof, the Russian foreign minister, told the English ambassador at St. Petersburg on July 30 that he had absolute proof that Germany was making military and naval preparations against Russia.¹⁰ The German chancellor as late as July 31 declared that his Government had made no preparations for mobilization. The German White Book also charges that between July 29 and 31 there appeared renewed and cumulative evidence concerning Rus-

⁹ R. O. B., 58; F. Y. B., 100; B. W. P., 113; S., 1022.

¹⁰ B. W. P., 97; R. O. B., 61, 62.

sian mobilization. Concentration of troops on the east Russian frontier and a declaration of a state of war over all important parts of Russia's west frontier allowed no further doubt that Russian mobilization was in full swing, while such measures were all being denied on word of honor.¹¹

The order of mobilization on the part of Russia did not cause an immediate break in the relations with Austria-Hungary. For the Russian ambassador at Vienna was still exchanging views with the Austro-Hungarian minister for foreign affairs on the 31st, after Russia's order for mobilization had been promulgated.¹² Russia maintained that mobilization in her case did not necessarily mean war, as she could remain mobilized for months without making war.

"This was not the case [with Germany]. She had the speed and Russia had the numbers," and she did not propose to sacrifice that advantage by delay.¹³ So at midnight July 31, the German ambassador at St. Petersburg declared to the Russian Government that Germany would mobilize if Russia did not commence demobilization in twelve hours, not only against Germany but also against Austria. The French foreign minister considered this a

¹¹ G. W. B., S., 777-8; exhibits 23, 24.

¹² R. O. B., 66.

¹³ B. W. P., 138.

very unreasonable demand inasmuch as Russia had not ordered a general mobilization until "after Austria had decreed a general mobilization and that the Russian Government were ready to demobilize if all Powers did likewise." The German chancellor took the position that a general mobilization on the part of Russia necessarily meant a mobilization against Germany.¹⁴ Russia made no answer to this demand, and Germany declared war on Russia on the evening of August 1.¹⁵ Five days later Austria-Hungary followed her ally in a declaration of war against Russia.¹⁶

France and Germany were the next countries to go to war. The documents show conflicting claims as to which power first began mobilization and it is hard to say which country took the initiative as to mobilization. The question of priority of military preparations, however, was of no great significance as a cause of war between Germany and France. France was bound by treaty obligations to Russia, and let it be known before Russia and Germany went to war that she would stand by her ally. As early as July 27, the French ambassador at Berlin informed Von Jagow, German foreign minister, that the relations of Germany

¹⁴ R. O. B., 70; G. W. B., 23, 24; B. W. P., 126.

¹⁵ R. O. B., 76.

¹⁶ R. O. B., 79.

and Austria were no closer than those of France and Russia.¹⁷ On July 29 the French premier declared that Russia could count on his country, as France would fulfill all her obligations as Russia's ally. He was anxious, however, for peace and wanted England to renew her offer of the mediation of the four powers.¹⁸ The French ambassador at London told Sir Edward Grey this same day that France "was bound to help Russia if Russia was attacked."¹⁹

Two days later (July 31), M. Jules Cambon, the French ambassador at Berlin, was informed by Von Jagow that his Government, owing to the general mobilization of the Russian army, had proclaimed *Kriegsgefahrzustand* (the state of danger of war). M. Cambon was also at the same time notified of Germany's demand on Russia that the latter cease mobilization.²⁰ The French military authorities regarded this proclamation as tantamount to mobilization. It was, they said, "mobilization under another name." As the French frontier forces were faced by eight German corps, they were in imminent danger of attack by the latter. For these reasons the French Government in the afternoon of August 1 ordered a general mobilization, stating at the same time that it was

¹⁷ F. Y. B., 74.

¹⁸ F. Y. B., 101; R. O. B., 55.

¹⁹ B. W. P., 87.

²⁰ F. Y. B., 116.

taking this action purely for defensive purposes. The French troops were stationed ten kilometers from the frontier and were not to attack the Germans.²¹

In the evening of July 31, M. Viviani, the French foreign minister, was asked by the German ambassador at Paris to state "what the attitude of France would be in case of war between Germany and Russia." The French Government understood this inquiry, it declared, to carry with it an intimation that Germany would recall her ambassador from Paris if a satisfactory answer were not given next day. The French foreign office regarded this as an extraordinary request and took the position that it did not have to announce its intentions to any power other than an ally.²² Therefore, when the inquiry was renewed next day, the French premier replied that "France would do that which her interests dictated."²³

This answer was, of course, not satisfactory to Germany, but her ambassador was not recalled until August 3, on which day war was formally declared on France by Germany.²⁴ France maintained diplomatic relations with Austria-Hungary a week longer, and did not declare war on this power until August 12.²⁵

²¹ B. W. P., 136, 140.

²² G. W. B., exhibit 25; F. Y. B., 117; B. W. P., 126.

²³ G. W. B., exhibit 27.

²⁴ F. Y. B., 147, 148.

²⁵ A. R. B., 63, 65.

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Montenegro sympathized warmly with Serbia and decided early to help her against her enemies. She, therefore, declared war against Austria-Hungary on August 8 and against Germany four days later.

CHAPTER IX

GREAT BRITAIN DECLARES WAR ON THE TEUTONIC POWERS

GREAT BRITAIN was anxious that a European conflict be avoided,¹ and, as has been seen, suggested several plans for settling the questions at issue. She was willing to support both the policy of isolation championed by Germany and the policy of prevention championed by Russia. She was the only great power whose hands were not tied by alliances. Her understanding with France and Russia did not impose upon her a treaty obligation to enter the war if either or both of these powers should be drawn into the conflict. Nor is there the slightest intimation in all the correspondence that France and Russia considered that she was bound by the terms of the Triple Entente to take sides with them against their enemies. Britain, therefore, declared herself interested in the quarrel only in so far as it jeopardized the peace of Europe and thereby menaced her own security.

Her attitude toward the Austro-Serbian quar-

¹ B. W. P., 1, 3.

rel was in keeping with this general policy. While she regarded the demands of Austria-Hungary as unreasonable and considered that Serbia's "reply went farther than could have been expected to meet Austrian demands,"² still she declined to discuss the merits of the case, declaring that she would concern herself with the dispute only to the extent that it affected the peace of Europe. She was interested in Austria's ultimatum solely because of the trouble between Austria and Russia that might grow out of it. This stand was taken as early as July 24, and it was known to all the interested powers.³

Russia and France were anxious for Great Britain to join them "in making a communication to Austria to the effect that active intervention by her in the internal affairs of Serbia could not be tolerated," believing that by such joint action war might be averted. She declined to join in such a declaration, although she was asked to do so by the Russian foreign minister and the French ambassador at St. Petersburg as early as July 24.⁴ Russia thought that Germany was counting on England's neutrality and that this was the reason for her supporting Austria-Hungary in her militant policy. Sir Edward Grey contended

² B. W. P., 5, 46, 116, 119.

⁴ B. W. P., 6, 24.

³ B. W. P., 3, 10, 6, 24, 11.

that Germany had no right to assume that Great Britain would stand aside in any event. He said that this impression ought to be dispelled by the orders given (July 27) to the fleet concentrated at Portland "not to disperse for maneuver leave."⁵ He was careful, however, to announce that these naval orders were not to be construed as a pledge that Britain would assist Russia and France in case they should be drawn into war. As late as July 29, Sir Edward Grey stated to the French ambassador at London that his Government would not take part in the Serbian dispute nor even in a war between Russia and Austria, for that would only be a struggle over the hegemony of the Balkans. But if Germany or France were brought in and the hegemony of Europe were involved, that would present a problem the solution of which Great Britain had not yet determined upon. A like statement was made to the German ambassador at London and the announcement to him seems to have been more positive and to have assumed the tone of a threat. He said that if the issue should become so great that it would involve all European interests he did not wish the German ambassador to be misled by the friendly tone of his conversation "into thinking that we [Great Britain] should stand aside." He made it

⁵ B. W. P., 47.

clear that if British interests should require intervention the Government would intervene at once.⁶

Germany was undoubtedly anxious that Great Britain remain neutral if she and Austria were to be involved in a war with France and Russia. On July 29 Germany made her first bid for British neutrality. The chancellor promised that if England would pledge her neutrality during the "European conflagration" that now seemed probable, Germany would give assurances that the neutrality of Holland and the integrity of France would be respected. These assurances, however, did not cover the neutrality of Belgium and the colonial possessions of France.⁷ Sir Edward Grey declined to bind his country to "neutrality on such terms."⁸

While Great Britain did not give Germany a promise of neutrality, at the same time she refused to pledge support to France. This attitude of indecision she maintained despite the opinion of the President of France that the peace of Europe was depending on her action. On July 30 he declared to the British ambassador at Paris that if England should now announce her intention of coming "to the aid of France in the event of a conflict between France and Germany, . . . there would be no war, for

⁶ B. W. P., 87, 89.

⁸ B. W. P., 101.

⁷ B. W. P., 85.

Germany would at once modify her attitude.”⁹ The Italian minister for foreign affairs also thought that Britain’s attitude would have great influence on Germany. He told the English ambassador at Rome on July 30 that he had reason to believe that “Germany was now disposed to give more conciliatory advice to Austria, as she seemed convinced that we [Great Britain] should [would] act with France and Russia, and was most anxious to avoid issue with us [Great Britain].”¹⁰

Next day, Sir Edward Grey told the German ambassador at London that he would support at Paris and St. Petersburg any reasonable proposal put forward by Germany, and if France and Russia would not accept such a proposal, he would “have nothing more to do with the consequences.” On the other hand, if no such proposition was made and France became involved in the war, then England would be drawn in.¹¹ On this very day Austria-Hungary declared her willingness to discuss “the substance of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia.”¹² “Austria’s readiness to discuss was the result of German influence at Vienna,” according to the claim of the German secretary of state.¹³ Whether Germany gave this conciliatory advice to

⁹ B. W. P., 99.

¹⁰ B. W. P., 106.

¹¹ B. W. P., 111.

¹² B. W. P., 133; A. R. B., 51.

¹³ B. W. P., 138.

Austria-Hungary of her own volition or whether she was induced to do it by the stiffening attitude of Great Britain is not revealed in the published correspondence.

While Sir Edward Grey had, by the morning of July 31, warned the German ambassador that his country would intervene in case "France and Germany became involved in war" as a result of the failure of Germany to put forward a reasonable proposal showing her desire for peace,¹⁴ still he declined later on in the same day to give a pledge of intervention to France, but promised to reconsider this decision whenever any new development should warrant it. "The preservation of the neutrality of Belgium," said he, "might be, I would not say a decisive, but an important factor, in determining our attitude."¹⁵

In the afternoon of the same day Sir Edward Grey telegraphed an inquiry to both Germany and France as to whether each would respect the neutrality of Belgium "so long as no other power violates it."¹⁶ France replied at once that she would respect the neutrality of Belgium.¹⁷ The reply of the German Government was not satisfactory. Von Jagow, the secretary of state, said that he could not answer until after he had consulted the Emperor and

¹⁴ B. W. P., 111, 119.

¹⁵ B. W. P., 116, 119.

¹⁶ B. W. P., 114.

¹⁷ B. W. P., 125.

the chancellor. Besides, the British ambassador at Berlin got the impression that Von Jagow thought any reply given by him might reveal to some extent the German plan of campaign in case war should break out, and, therefore, he might not give any answer at all. According to the understanding of the British ambassador, Von Jagow seemed also to think that Belgium had already committed hostile acts against Germany in that she had held up a consignment of corn for the latter country.¹⁸

Next morning (August 1), Sir Edward Grey had a telephone conversation with Prince Lichnowsky, German ambassador at London, in which, according to the understanding of the ambassador, Sir Edward Grey asked if Germany would agree not to "attack France in a war between Germany and Russia in case France should remain neutral." Prince Lichnowsky expressed the belief that his Government would be willing to enter into such an engagement and telegraphed the inquiry, as he interpreted it, to Berlin.

Prince Lichnowsky, however, had, according to the London *Times*, received a very erroneous impression of the terms of the proposed engagement. "There was no question," says this paper, "of French neutrality in the event of a Russo-German war." This famous telephone

¹⁸ B. W. P., 122.

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conversation took place at 11:30 A. M., and, according to the information received by the *Times*, Lichnowsky's misunderstanding was corrected in an official conference immediately afterward. In this "official conversation . . . it was plainly pointed out that . . . if Germany fought France must fight also." "Prince Lichnowsky at once said that he had been under a misapprehension, and telegraphed to Berlin a correction of his previous telegram." No such telegram appears in the list of dispatches officially published by the German Government. The *Times* charges that it was left out with the intent to deceive the neutral public and thus make out a case of perfidy against England. The *North German Gazette*, on the other hand, denies the existence of such a telegram, and, furthermore, states that the private secretary of Sir Edward Grey called on Prince Lichnowsky later in the day (at 1:15 P. M.) and said that the foreign "minister desired to make proposals to me [him] regarding England's neutrality, even for the event that we [Germany] should go to war with Russia as well as with France."¹⁹

Sir Edward Grey's testimony as to the misunderstanding supports the contention of the *Times*. In the latter part of August, 1914, he

¹⁹ London *Times*, August 27, 1914, quoted in Stowell, 334, note; see also S., 824.

made in the House of Commons the following statement:

The circumstances were as follows: It was reported to me one day that the German Ambassador had suggested that Germany might remain neutral in a war between Russia and Austria and also engage not to attack France if we would remain neutral and secure the neutrality of France. I said at once that if the German Government thought such an arrangement possible I was sure we could secure it.

It appeared, however, that what the Ambassador meant was that we should secure the neutrality of France if Germany went to war with Russia. This was quite a different proposal, and as I supposed it in all probability to be incompatible with the terms of the Franco-Russian Alliance, it was not in my power to promise to secure it.

Subsequently, the Ambassador sent for my private secretary and told him that as soon as the misunderstanding was cleared up he had sent a second telegram to Berlin to cancel the impression produced by the first telegram he had sent on the subject. The first telegram has been published. This second telegram does not seem to have been published.²⁰

The misunderstanding was apparently not cleared up until after the German Emperor had made his reply, which was, in part, as follows: "On technical grounds my mobilization which had already been proclaimed this afternoon, must proceed against two fronts, east and west as prepared. . . . But if France offers me neutrality, which must be guaranteed by the

²⁰ *London Times*, August 29, 1914, quoted in Stowell, 330-331.

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British fleet and army, I shall of course refrain from attacking France and employ my troops elsewhere. . . . The troops on my frontier are in the act of being stopped by telegraph and telephone from crossing into France." In the chancellor's telegram to the German ambassador, the same day, he said: "We guarantee that our troops will not cross the French frontier before 7 P. M. on Monday, 3rd inst., if England has consented to our proposal by that time."

Next day Prince Lichnowsky telegraphed the chancellor that Sir Edward Grey's "suggestions were prompted by a desire to make it possible for England to keep permanent neutrality, but as they were not based on a previous understanding with France and made without knowledge of our mobilization, they have been abandoned as absolutely hopeless."²¹

No mention is made in the British White Paper of this effort on the part of Germany to secure the neutrality of France. Sir Edward Grey, however, does tell of an important interview held with Prince Lichnowsky on this same day, in which the price of England's neutrality was asked by Germany. The foreign minister in a telegram (August 1) to the British ambassador at Berlin gives the following account of this meeting:

²¹ For these telegrams, see S., 820-26.

I told the German Ambassador to-day that the reply of the German Government with regard to the neutrality of Belgium was a matter of very great regret, because the neutrality of Belgium affected feeling in this country. If Germany could see her way to give the same assurance as that which had been given by France it would materially contribute to relieve anxiety and tension here. On the other hand, if there were a violation of the neutrality of Belgium by one combatant while the other respected it, it would be extremely difficult to restrain public feeling in this country. I said that we had been discussing this question at a Cabinet meeting, and as I was authorized to tell him this I gave him a memorandum of it.

He asked me whether, if Germany gave a promise not to violate Belgian neutrality, we would engage to remain neutral.

I replied that I could not say that; our hands were still free, and we were considering what our attitude should be. All I could say was that our attitude would be determined largely by public opinion here, and that the neutrality of Belgium would appeal very strongly to public opinion here. I did not think that we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone.

The Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could not formulate conditions on which we would remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her colonies might be guaranteed.

I said that I felt obliged to refuse definitely any promise to remain neutral on similar terms, and I could only say that we must keep our hands free.²²

On this same day (August 1), after he had been advised by the British ambassador at Berlin that the German foreign office would post-

²² B. W. P., 123.

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pone its reply to the English inquiry regarding the neutrality of Belgium probably indefinitely and certainly until after the chancellor and the Emperor had been consulted, Sir Edward Grey told the French ambassador at London that he would ask the cabinet to promise that the British fleet would oppose an attack on the French coast by the German navy.²³

The cabinet had a memorable meeting next day (Sunday). After this session, Sir Edward Grey made the following report to the French ambassador:

I am authorized to give an assurance that, if the German fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against French coasts or shipping, the British fleet will give all the protection in its power.

This assurance is of course subject to the policy of His Majesty's Government receiving the support of Parliament, and must not be taken as binding His Majesty's Government to take any action until the above contingency of action by the German fleet takes place.²⁴

According to the *London Times*, the cabinet up to this time had been divided in opinion as to what policy should be pursued, but Germany's action regarding Belgium and Luxemburg had turned the scale decisively in favor of supporting France if her coast were at-

²³ F. Y. B., 126; B. W. P., 122.

²⁴ B. W. P., 148.

tacked.²⁵ Nor was this belief confined to the members of the party in power, as is shown by the following letter, written by the leader of the Parliamentary opposition before the cabinet had reached a final decision:

2d August, 1914.

Dear Mr. Asquith,—Lord Lansdowne and I feel it our duty to inform you that in our opinion, as well as in that of all the colleagues whom we have been able to consult, it would be fatal to the honor and security of the United Kingdom to hesitate in supporting France and Russia at the present juncture; and we offer our unhesitating support to the Government in any measures they may consider necessary for that object.—Yours very truly, A. BONAR LAW.²⁶

On Monday, August 3, Sir Edward Grey made a speech before the House of Commons,

²⁵ *London Times*, Aug. 5, 1914; see Stowell, 342-3.

²⁶ *London Times*, Aug. 15, 1914, quoted in Stowell, 343. The *Times* also thought that public opinion endorsed this action. An editorial August 3 says that England's safety and interests demand that she stand by France as she had successfully done in 1905 and 1911. If not, she will be isolated. "It is a question of destroying the security of the Mediterranean, through which England's route to Egypt and India and the bulk of her food supplies pass." The independence of Holland, Belgium, and Luxemburg is necessary to guard England's control of the Channel. "By naval agreement with France, England has guaranteed French coasts in the north against German attack. The French fleet has been concentrated in the Mediterranean to help our Mediterranean squadron in protecting the freedom of our communications with Egypt and India. If once the German armies are allowed to crush France, not only will England be unable to preserve the independence of Holland, Belgium, and Luxemburg, but Germany will be able to annex French territory up to Dunkirk, Calais, and Havre, compel Holland and Belgium to cede to her their colonies, establish herself within striking distance of Australia and New Zealand, and threaten the safety of our trade routes on every sea."

stating what assurances he had given the French Government and his reasons for so doing. He declared that England was not obliged by any engagements to come to the aid of France, but that she had for some years been bound to France by the ties of a growing friendship. This friendship imposed upon Britain the obligation to see that France's helpless coasts were not battered down by a hostile fleet. For France, relying on this friendship, had concentrated her fleet in the Mediterranean and thus left her western and northern coasts unguarded. Under these circumstances, therefore, he considered that public sentiment would not allow the English Government to stand aside and allow a friendly neighbor's coasts to be "bombarded and battered" in a war not of her own seeking.

Besides, Britain's self-interests demanded, in his opinion, that France be informed as to what aid she could count on from England. For if Great Britain should promise no aid to France, the French fleet would have to be withdrawn from the Mediterranean. The English fleet in the Mediterranean was not as strong as the combined fleets of other nations. If Britain should later become involved in the war, she would either lose control of the Mediterranean route or else be compelled to send thither ships badly needed to protect her own coasts. Be-

sides, it looked as if Britain would be dragged into the war. In fact, he believed that nothing but an unconditional promise of neutrality would save her from that fate. Great Britain, of course, could not afford to make such a dishonorable promise; for if she did, her people would sacrifice their "respect and good name and reputation before the world and should not escape the most serious and grave economic consequences." ²⁷

By the fourth of August, the King of Belgium had made an appeal to Great Britain "for diplomatic intervention on behalf of Belgium," whose neutrality was threatened by Germany. In response to this appeal, Sir Edward Grey sent a protest to the German Government and demanded immediate assurances that "the demand made upon Belgium will not be proceeded with and that her neutrality will be respected by Germany." ²⁸ On the same day the German foreign secretary telegraphed to the German ambassador at London as follows:

Please dispel any mistrust that may subsist on the part of the British Government with regard to our intentions, by repeating most positively formal assurance that, even in the case of armed conflict with Belgium, Germany will, under no pretense whatever, annex Belgian territory.

²⁷ *London Times*, Aug. 3, 1914, quoted by Stowell, 345-351.

²⁸ *B. W. P.*, 153.

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In giving his reason for the violation of Belgian neutrality, the German foreign secretary said:

Please impress upon Sir E. Grey that German army could not be exposed to French attack across Belgium, which was planned according to absolutely unimpeachable information. Germany had consequently to disregard Belgian neutrality, it being for her a question of life or death to prevent French advance.²⁹

On this same day (August 4), Sir Edward Grey, having learned that Belgian territory had been invaded by the Germans, sent an ultimatum to Germany. In his telegram to the British ambassador at Berlin he said:

We hear that Germany has addressed note to Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that German Government will be compelled to carry out, if necessary, by force of arms, the measures considered indispensable.

We are also informed that Belgian territory has been violated at Gemmenich.

In these circumstances, and in view of the fact that Germany declined to give the same assurance respecting Belgium as France gave last week in reply to our request made simultaneously at Berlin and Paris, we must repeat that request, and ask that a satisfactory reply to it and to my telegram of this morning be received here by 12 o'clock to-night. If not, you are instructed to ask for your passports, and to say that His Majesty's Government feel bound to take all steps in their power to uphold the neutrality of Belgium and the observance of a treaty to which Germany is as much a party as ourselves.³⁰

²⁹ B. W. P., 157.

³⁰ B. W. P., 159.

Upon receiving this telegram, Sir E. Goschen, the British ambassador at Berlin, went to the Imperial foreign office and delivered the ultimatum to Von Jagow, German Secretary of State. A little later on the same evening Sir E. Goschen had an interview with the German chancellor, Von Bethmann-Hollweg. Both Von Jagow and the chancellor were very much agitated and apparently were greatly pained at England's decision to join the ranks of Germany's enemies. This last interview between the British ambassador and the chancellor has been dramatically described by the former as follows:

During the afternoon I received your further telegram of the same date, and, in compliance with the instructions therein contained, I again proceeded to the Imperial Foreign Office and informed the Secretary of State that unless the Imperial Government could give the assurance by 12 o'clock that night that they would proceed no further with their violation of Belgian frontier and stop their advance, I had been instructed to demand my passports and inform the Imperial Government that His Majesty's Government would have to take all steps in their power to uphold the neutrality of Belgium and the observance of a treaty to which Germany was as much a party as themselves.

Herr von Jagow replied that to his great regret he could give no other answer than that which he had given me earlier in the day, namely, that the safety of the Empire rendered it absolutely necessary that the Imperial troops should advance through Belgium. I gave His Excellency a written summary of your

telegram and, pointing out that you had mentioned 12 o'clock as the time when His Majesty's Government would expect an answer, asked him whether, in view of the terrible consequences which would necessarily ensue, it were not possible even at the last moment that their answer should be reconsidered. He replied that if the time given were even twenty-four hours or more, his answer must be the same. I said that in that case I should have to demand my passports. This interview took place at about 7 o'clock. In a short conversation which ensued Herr von Jagow expressed his poignant regret at the crumbling of his entire policy and that of the Chancellor, which had been to make friends with Great Britain, and then, through Great Britain, to get closer to France. I said that this sudden end to my work in Berlin was to me also a matter of deep regret and disappointment, but that he must understand that under the circumstances and in view of our engagements, His Majesty's Government could not possibly have acted otherwise than they had done.

I then said that I should like to go and see the Chancellor, as it might be, perhaps, the last time I should have an opportunity of seeing him. He begged me to do so. I found the Chancellor very agitated. His Excellency at once began a harangue, which lasted for about twenty minutes. He said that the step taken by His Majesty's Government was terrible to a degree; just for a word—"neutrality," a word which in war time had so often been disregarded—just for a scrap of paper Great Britain was going to make war on a kindred nation who desired nothing better than to be friends with her. All his efforts in that direction had been rendered useless by this last terrible step, and the policy to which, I knew, he had devoted himself since his accession to office had tumbled down like a house of cards. What we had done was unthinkable; it was like striking a man from behind while he was fighting for his life against two

assailants. He held Great Britain responsible for all the terrible events that might happen. I protested strongly against that statement, and said that, in the same way as he and Herr von Jagow wished me to understand that for strategical reasons it was a matter of life and death to Germany to advance through Belgium and violate the latter's neutrality, so I would wish him to understand that it was, so to speak, a matter of "life and death" for the honor of Great Britain that she should keep her solemn engagement to do her utmost to defend Belgium's neutrality if attacked. That solemn compact simply had to be kept, or what confidence could any one have in engagements given by Great Britain in the future? The Chancellor said, "But at what price will that compact have been kept. Has the British Government thought of that?" I hinted to his Excellency as plainly as I could that fear of consequences could hardly be regarded as an excuse for breaking solemn engagements, but his Excellency was so excited, so evidently overcome by the news of our action, and so little disposed to hear reason that I refrained from adding fuel to the flame by further argument. As I was leaving he said that the blow of Great Britain joining Germany's enemies was all the greater that almost up to the last moment he and his Government had been working with us and supporting our efforts to maintain peace between Austria and Russia. I said that this was part of the tragedy which saw the two nations fall apart just at the moment when the relations between them had been more friendly and cordial than they had been for years.⁵¹

Soon after this interview, an extra edition of the Berliner *Tageblatt* came out stating that Great Britain had declared war on Germany. A mob then formed, attacked the British em-

⁵¹ B. W. P., 160.

bassy, overpowered the police force, and began smashing the windows with cobble stones. Sir E. Goschen telephoned to the foreign office for protection, and Von Jagow at once arranged for a larger police force to clear away the mob. The German foreign office regretted the occurrence very much and made a satisfactory apology to Sir E. Goschen. Next morning the British ambassador received his passports and on the following day left for England by way of Holland. War against Germany was declared by Great Britain that same day; the declaration against Austria-Hungary was not made until August 12.³²

³² B. W. P., 160; S., 1017.

NOTE:—It will be remembered that Germany had also violated the neutrality of Luxemburg by sending troops to occupy the duchy as early as August 2. The German chancellor contended that "the military measures taken in Luxemburg do not constitute a hostile act against Luxemburg, but are only intended to insure against a possible attack of a French army. Full compensation will be paid to Luxemburg for any damage caused by using the railways which are leased to the empire." See B. W. P., 129.

Now the perpetual neutrality of Luxemburg had been guaranteed by the powers in 1867, and this act of Germany's was a clear violation of the obligation inherited from Prussia, which was one of the powers signatory to the convention of 1867. England, however, was not willing to regard the invasion of Luxemburg as a *casus belli*. She contended that the responsibility for the maintenance of the neutrality of Luxemburg was collective and was to be discharged only by the joint action of all the guaranteeing powers.

The case of Belgium, however, was, according to Sir Edward Grey, different from that of Luxemburg. England's obligation to uphold Belgium's neutrality was individual, not collective, and imposed upon her the duty of requiring the observance of the convention of 1839, "without the assistance of the other guaranteeing powers." F. Y. B., 137.

CHAPTER X

THE VIOLATION OF THE NEUTRALITY OF BELGIUM

IN 1814-15, the European powers met in the Congress of Vienna to remake the map of Europe, which had been disarranged by Napoleon. At that time Germany was divided and weak, and France had proved herself aggressive and strong. It was feared that this weakness of Germany would in the future invite the aggression of France, and Europe would thus be thrown again into the turmoil of a general war. To prevent this the powers planned the creation of a strong state between France and Germany by uniting Belgium with Holland.

The union, however, was an unnatural one from the beginning; historic tradition was against it. Except for a short time during the Napoleonic era, the two parts had been separated for more than two centuries and had thus grown apart. Besides, the peoples of the two countries differed from each other in language, race, religion, and economic conditions. It is not surprising, therefore, that friction de-

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veloped between the northern and southern halves and the Belgians grew more and more tired of the union. The revolution of July, 1830, in France encouraged the Belgian malcontents, and in August, 1830, the Belgians revolted against Holland and demanded a separate government under the Dutch king. These demands were refused and Belgium declared her independence, electing Leopold of Coburg king.

It could hardly be expected that this annulment of the arrangement of 1815 would be countenanced by the great powers, and the Holy Alliance powers were at first in favor of forcing Belgium back into the union with Holland. But the independence of Belgium was favored by the British foreign minister and the new French king, Louis Philippe, who owed his throne to a similar revolution and could not afford to allow the absolute monarchies to thwart the wishes of the Belgian people. France, therefore, declared that if they intervened in favor of the Dutch, she would intervene in favor of the Belgians. Besides, Russia's hands were soon tied by a revolt in Poland, and Prussia and Austria had to keep their eyes on their Polish subjects and eastern boundaries. Consequently, the powers had to consent to the independence of Belgium. The powers held conferences in London and in 1831

agreed to guarantee the perpetual neutrality of Belgium. This agreement was superseded by another treaty signed in 1839, which also guaranteed the perpetual neutrality of Belgium; Prussia, England, France, Austria, and Russia were the parties to this agreement. The neutrality article was as follows:

Belgium, within the limits specified in Articles I, II and IV, shall form an independent and perpetually Neutral State. It shall be bound to observe such Neutrality towards all other states.¹

The German Empire was not, of course, a signatory to the treaty, as it had not come into existence at this time. However, the obligation as to Belgium's neutrality incurred by Prussia in 1839 was binding on the German Empire in 1914, for it had inherited the treaty obligations of the states out of which it was formed. "In many instances the German Government has claimed the benefits of treaty rights previously enjoyed by the separate states of the Empire." As an example of this, the German foreign office recognized the Prussian-American treaty of 1799 as binding upon the Imperial Government in 1915.²

On August 9, 1870, at the time of the Franco-German War, England and Prussia, "being desirous . . . of recording in a solemn Act

¹ Stowell, 602.

² Stowell, 385; Jour. (9), 182.

their fixed determination to maintain the Independence and Neutrality of Belgium, as provided in Article VII of the Treaty" of 1839, signed a new treaty, "which, without impairing or invalidating the conditions of the said Quintuple Treaty [treaty of 1839], shall be subsidiary and accessory to it." This treaty was to last until twelve months after the ratification of a treaty of peace between France and the North German Confederation. It was further agreed that "on the expiration of that time the Independence and Neutrality of Belgium will, so far as the High Contracting Parties are respectively concerned, continue to rest as heretofore on Article 1 of the Quintuple Treaty of the 19th April, 1839."³

A few German apologists contend that subsequent events had deprived the neutrality provision of the Quintuple Treaty of its binding force and, therefore, it had by 1914 become a dead letter. Publicists are, however, all but unanimous in contending that it was still alive both in spirit as well as in letter.⁴ It ought to

³ For the main provisions of this treaty see Stowell, 602-3; or for the full treaty, Hertslet's *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, vol. iv, pp. 1886-88.

⁴ For the arguments on both sides the reader is referred to the fuller works, as the scope and plan of this volume do not allow of even a résumé of these discussions. For a good, short discussion favorable to the view that the treaty of 1839 was still binding, see Stowell, 382-91. For a more lengthy argument against this view, see Fuehr, *The Neutrality of Belgium*, 120-176.

be remembered, however, that the German Government in giving its reasons for invading Belgium did not claim that the neutrality agreement was no longer binding, but admitted that the invasion was a breach of international law and an act of injustice made necessary by the conviction that France was preparing to lead an army into Belgium.⁵ Besides, the German Imperial secretary of state, Herr von Jagow, said in 1913: "Belgian neutrality is provided for by International Conventions and Germany is determined to respect those Conventions."⁶

On July 24, M. Davignon, Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, sent instructions to the Belgian ambassadors in all the countries which had promised to guarantee the neutrality of Belgium, to the effect that Belgium would expect that, in the event of war, her neutrality would be respected and that she would do all in her power to uphold it. These instructions were not to be acted upon by the ambassadors until further notice.⁷ On the first of August, the foreign office telgraphed to the ambassadors to carry out these instructions.⁸

Next day (August 2) the German ambassador at Brussels handed the following note to the Belgian foreign minister:

⁵ See p. 149.

⁶ B. G. B., 12, enclosure.

⁷ B. G. B., 2 and enclosure.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

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(Very Confidential.)

Reliable information has been received by the German Government to the effect that French forces intend to march on the line of the Meuse by Givet and Namur. This information leaves no doubt as to the intention of France to march through Belgian territory against Germany.

The German Government cannot but fear that Belgium, in spite of the utmost goodwill, will be unable, without assistance, to repel so considerable a French invasion with sufficient prospect of success to afford an adequate guarantee against danger to Germany. It is essential for the self-defense of Germany that she should anticipate any such hostile attack. The German Government would, however, feel the deepest regret if Belgium regarded as an act of hostility against herself the fact that the measures of Germany's opponents force Germany, for her own protection, to enter Belgian territory.

In order to exclude any possibility of misunderstanding, the German Government make the following declaration:

1. Germany has in view no act of hostility against Belgium. In the event of Belgium being prepared in the coming war to maintain an attitude of friendly neutrality towards Germany, the German Government bind themselves, at the conclusion of peace, to guarantee the possessions and independence of the Belgian Kingdom in full.

2. Germany undertakes, under the above-mentioned condition, to evacuate Belgian territory on the conclusion of peace.

3. If Belgium adopts a friendly attitude, Germany is prepared, in coöperation with the Belgian authorities, to purchase all necessities for her troops against a cash payment, and to pay an indemnity for any damage that may have been caused by German troops

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4. Should Belgium oppose the German troops, and in particular should she throw difficulties in the way of their march by a resistance of the fortresses on the Meuse, or by destroying railways, roads, tunnels, or other similar works, Germany will, to her regret, be compelled to consider Belgium as an enemy.

In this event, Germany can undertake no obligations towards Belgium, but the eventual adjustment of the relations between the two States must be left to the decision of arms.

The German Government, however, entertain the distinct hope that this eventuality will not occur, and that the Belgian Government will know how to take the necessary measures to prevent the occurrence of incidents such as those mentioned. In this case the friendly ties which bind the two neighboring States will grow more stronger and more enduring.⁹

The German note was delivered at 7 p. m., and the Belgian Government was given only twelve hours in which to give its answer. So in the early morning of August 3, M. Davignon, Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, handed to the German ambassador at Brussels the following reply:

This note has made a deep and painful impression upon the Belgian Government.

The intentions attributed to France by Germany are in contradiction to the formal declarations made by us on August 1, in the name of the French Government.

Moreover, if, contrary to our expectation, Belgian neutrality should be violated by France, Belgium intends to fulfill her international obligations and the

⁹ B. G. B., 20.

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Belgian army would offer the most vigorous resistance to the invader.

The treaties of 1839, confirmed by the treaties of 1870, vouch for the independence and neutrality of Belgium under the guarantee of the Powers, and notably of the Government of His Majesty the King of Prussia.

Belgium has always been faithful to her international obligations, she has carried out her duties in a spirit of loyal impartiality, and she has left nothing undone to maintain and enforce respect for her neutrality.

The attack upon her independence with which the German Government threaten her constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. No strategic interest justifies such a violation of law.

The Belgian Government, if they were to accept the proposals submitted to them, would sacrifice the honor of the nation and betray their duty towards Europe.

Conscious of the part which Belgium has played for more than eighty years in the civilization of the world, they refuse to believe that the independence of Belgium can only be preserved at the price of the violation of her neutrality.

If this hope is disappointed the Belgian Government are firmly resolved to repel, by all the means in their power, every attack upon their rights.¹⁰

Next morning Germany announced to Belgium that inasmuch as her Government had rejected "the well intentioned proposals made to them [it] by the German Government, the latter, to their deep regret," would be "compelled to take—if necessary by force of arms—

¹⁰ B. G. B., 22.

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those measures of defence already foreshadowed as indispensable in view of the menace of France.”¹¹ This threat was followed up immediately; for German troops entered Belgian territory that very morning (August 4).¹² Negotiations between the two countries were broken off at once.¹³

On that same August 4, the Imperial chancellor made a speech before the Reichstag, in which he said, in part:

Gentlemen, we are now acting in self-defense. Necessity knows no law. Our troops have occupied Luxemburg and have possibly already entered on Belgian soil.

Gentlemen, that is a breach of international law.

The French Government has notified Brussels that it would respect Belgian neutrality as long as the adversary respected it. But we know that France stood ready for an invasion. France could wait, we could not. A French invasion in our flank and the lower Rhine might have been disastrous. Thus we were forced to ignore the rightful protests of the Governments of Luxemburg and Belgium. The injustice—I speak openly—the injustice we thereby commit we will try to make good as soon as our military aims have been attained. He who is menaced as we are and is fighting for his All, can only consider the one and best way to strike.¹⁴

Germany was still willing, she said, to adhere to her original promise to Belgium,

¹¹ B. G. B., 27.

¹² B. G. B., 40.

¹³ B. G. B., 34.

¹⁴ See *International Conciliation*, pamphlet 84.

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namely, to restore her territory to her after the war.¹⁵ Three days later (August 9), after Liège had fallen, Germany again approached Belgium through the Dutch minister for foreign affairs. She renewed the promise to restore her territory to her after the war, if Belgium would come to terms with her.¹⁶ This offer was flatly declined by Belgium.¹⁷

On the same day (August 3) on which Belgium declined to meet Germany's demands, King Albert asked the King of England to have his Government intervene diplomatically to safeguard the neutrality of his country.¹⁸ The Belgian Government contends, however, that it did not ask for military aid until after its territory had been invaded by Germany.¹⁹ In the meantime (August 4) Britain announced to Belgium that she expected her to uphold her neutrality and also promised aid if her neutrality were violated.²⁰

After Brussels had been captured by the Germans, certain documents were found in the Belgian archives, which were published to support the charge of Germany that Belgium had before the war surrendered her neutrality. These documents show the following:

(1) In April, 1906, General Ducarme, Chief

¹⁵ B. G. B., 36.

¹⁶ B. G. B., 60, 62, enclosure.

¹⁷ B. G. B., 65.

¹⁸ B. G. B., 25.

¹⁹ B. G. B., 78.

²⁰ B. G. B., 28.

of the Belgian General Staff, reported to the Belgian minister of war the results of some conversations that he had had with Lieutenant Colonel Barnardiston, military attaché of the British legation at Brussels. At these interviews plans were discussed for sending British troops to Belgium to aid her against Germany in case war broke out. Colonel Barnardiston "referred to the anxieties of the general staff of his country with regard to the general political situation, in view of the possibility of war soon breaking out." The discussion covered details as to the number of British troops to be furnished, places of disembarkation, methods of transportation, etc. It is also stated that Colonel Barnardiston gave General Ducarme much secret information regarding the "military circumstances and the situation" of Belgium's "Eastern neighbor." The term "allied forces" was used in the documents for the British and Belgian troops. At one of these conferences an agreement was reached as to a plan of combined operations in case Antwerp were attacked by the Germans.

Colonel Barnardiston is represented as saying that this plan had the approval of the chief of the British general staff; but he insisted that these conversations were not binding on his Government, and that they were not known by any one except the general staff, the English

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minister at Brussels, and himself. He "did not know whether the opinion of his sovereign had been consulted."

On the margin of the document was the following statement: "The entry of the English into Belgium shall not take place until after the violation of our [Belgian] neutrality by Germany."²¹

On April 23, 1912, a similar conversation was held between the British military attaché in Brussels, who was now Lieutenant Colonel Bridges, and the Belgian chief of the general staff, who was now General Jungbluth. At this meeting "Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges told the general that Great Britain had, available for dispatch to the Continent, an army composed of six divisions of infantry and eight brigades of cavalry, in all 160,000 men. She had also all that she needed for home defence. Everything was ready.

"The British Government, at the time of the recent events, would have immediately landed troops on our territory, even if we had not asked for help.

"The general protested that our consent would be necessary for this. The military attaché answered that he knew that, but that as we were not in a position to prevent the Germans passing through our territory, Great

²¹ B. G. B., appendix 4 (1), S., 845-6.

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Britain would have landed her troops in any event. . . .

"The general added that, after all, we were, besides, perfectly able to prevent the Germans from going through." ²²

One of the documents found was a dispatch from Baron Greindl, Belgian minister at Berlin, to the Belgian minister for foreign affairs, dated December 23, 1911. The burden of this dispatch was that the Belgian Government was acting unwisely in making arrangements as if the only danger of attack was from the side of Germany. Belgium's neutrality, he thought, was in as much danger from the French as the German side. He said: "From the French side the danger threatens not only in the south from Luxemburg; it threatens us along our whole common frontier. For this assertion we are not dependent only on surmises. We have positive facts to go upon." ²³

Another document found was "a map showing (it is alleged) the method of deployment of the French army." ²⁴

These documents were published on October 13, 1914, by the *North German Gazette* and were also afterwards printed in English and commented on by Dr. Bernhard Dernburg, Ger-

²² B. G. B., 4 (2), Col. Doc., 360-1.

²³ B. G. B., appendix 2, Col. Doc., 351.

²⁴ B. G. B., appendix 5, Col. Doc., 363.

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man agent in America. These two advocates for Germany contend that these documents prove that England had intended, in case a Franco-German war broke out, to send troops to Belgium and thus violate the neutrality of Belgium; that Belgium by listening to and keeping secret the "whisperings" of Great Britain had compromised her neutrality; and that she should have notified the other signatories of the treaty of 1839, especially Germany, of the suggestions of England. They charge that the negotiations prove that Belgium had entered into a convention with Great Britain against Germany, and that the French military map, together with other facts mentioned in the documents, go to show that France was a party to this convention.²⁵

Belgium's defense to these charges is as follows:

"It is recognized that Belgium has the right to make defensive agreements for putting into operation the guarantees given by the guaranteeing powers." Now the arrangement contemplated by the Belgian and English officials was just such an agreement. These discussions, however, did not result in a convention between Belgium and Great Britain, and no evidence that such a convention existed has been adduced. These negotiations went no

²⁵ S., 839-40; Col. Doc., 364.

farther than "the submission of a report to the minister of war by the chief of the general staff." Even in these discussions Belgium did not take the initiative; she only showed a willingness to discuss with the British officials plans for carrying out the obligations that Great Britain had assumed in 1839. But the Belgian Government in 1906 considered after these conversations that the general guarantee was adequate and that a supplementary agreement as to detailed plans for making good the guarantee was not necessary. "Baron Greindl's attitude towards Barnardiston's suggestions proves conclusively that he knew that these suggestions had not resulted in any convention."

As to the conversation between Colonel Bridges and General Jungbluth, the Belgian chief of staff protested against the opinion of the English colonel that Britain would have landed troops in Belgium without her consent since, in his opinion, Belgium could not have prevented the Germans from passing through the country. General Jungbluth insisted that Belgium's consent was necessary and that Belgium was "'perfectly well able' to stop the Germans; that is to say, to make them lose sufficient time to deprive them of the advantage of a sudden attack." In taking this stand, "General Jungbluth defended her [Belgium's] freedom and neutrality."

The French military map, it is contended, was not connected with the other documents and is, therefore, no evidence that France was a party to an alleged convention between England and Belgium. It only proves that the general staff of Belgium was on the look-out for information regarding the "military plans of neighboring powers."²⁶ As evidence that Great Britain so understood the attitude of the Belgian Government, Belgium points to the following official statement, published in the *London Times*, September 30, 1914:

For long past Great Britain knew that the Belgian army would oppose by force a "preventive" disembarkation of British troops in Belgium. The Belgian Government did not hesitate at the time of the Agadir crises to warn foreign ambassadors, in terms which could not be misunderstood, of its formal intention to compel respect for the neutrality of Belgium by every means at its disposal, and against attempts upon it from any and every quarter.²⁷

Britain disavows having ever had any intention of violating the neutrality of Belgium. Sir Edward Grey, however, admits that

In view of the solemn guarantee given by Great Britain to protect the neutrality of Belgium against violation from any side, some academic discussions may, through the instrumentality of Colonel Barnardiston, have taken place between General Grierson and the Belgian military authorities as to what assist-

²⁶ B. G. B., appendix 5, Col. Doc., 361-5.

²⁷ B. G. B., appendix 6, enclosure 3.

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ance the British army might be able to afford to Belgium should one of her neighbors violate that neutrality. Some notes with reference to the subject may exist in the archives at Brussels.

At that time there existed, he says, a fear in England and Belgium that Germany might attack France through Belgium as she had the year previous "adopted a threatening attitude towards France with regard to Morocco." This feeling of apprehension, he asserts, has been kept alive by the fact that Germany "since 1906 has established an elaborate network of strategical railways leading from the Rhine to the Belgian frontier through a barren, thinly-populated tract, deliberately constructed to permit of the sudden attack upon Belgium, which was carried out two months ago."²⁸

The conversation between the English Colonel Bridges and the Belgian chief of staff seems to have aroused a fear in Belgium that England would be the first power to violate her neutrality. Sir Edward Grey was informed of the existence of this feeling and spoke of it to the Belgian minister on April 7, 1913. He assured him that his Government would not be the first to violate the neutrality of Belgium, nor did he believe that public sentiment in England would ever approve of it. He promised the Belgian minister that his Government

²⁸ B. G. B., appendix 3, Col. Doc., 353.

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would never send troops into Belgium as long as her neutrality was not violated by any other power.²⁹

The lord high chancellor of England also denied that his country had ever had any intention of violating the neutrality of Belgium. In a letter written to the Master of Christ's College, Cambridge, November 14, 1914, he said:

It is quite untrue that the British Government had ever arranged with Belgium to trespass on her country in case of war, or that Belgium had agreed to this. The strategic dispositions of Germany, especially as regards railways, have for some years given rise to the apprehension that Germany would attack France through Belgium. Whatever military discussions have taken place before this war have been limited entirely to the suggestion of what could be done to defend France if Germany attacked her through Belgium. The Germans have stated that we contemplated sending troops to Belgium. We had never committed ourselves at all to the sending of troops to the Continent, and we had never contemplated the possibility of sending troops to Belgium to attack Germany.³⁰

It is charged by the Germans that "French and British troops had marched into Belgium before the outbreak of the war"; also, that "British military stores had been placed at Maubeuge, a French fortress near the Belgian frontier, before the outbreak of the war and that this is evidence of an intention to attack

²⁹ B. G. B., appendix 1, Col. Doc., 350.

³⁰ B. G. B., appendix 6, enclosure 1, Col. Doc., 365-6.

Germany through Belgium." In answer to the first of these charges, the London *Times* prints (September 30, 1914) an official statement as follows:

The German press has been attempting to persuade the public that if Germany herself had not violated Belgian neutrality France or Great Britain would have done so. It has declared that French and British troops had marched into Belgium before the outbreak of war. We have received from the Belgian Minister of War an official statement which denies absolutely these allegations. It declares, on the one hand, that "before August 3 not a single French soldier had set foot on Belgian territory," and again, "it is untrue that on August 4 there was a single English soldier in Belgium."

In answer to the second accusation, the lord chancellor said (November 14):

The Germans have stated that British military stores had been placed at Maubeuge, a French fortress near the Belgian frontier, before the outbreak of the war, and that this is evidence of an intention to attack Germany through Belgium. No British soldiers and no British stores were landed on the Continent till after Germany had invaded Belgium, and Belgium had appealed to France and England for assistance. It was only after this appeal that British troops were sent to France; and, if the Germans found British munitions of war in Maubeuge, these munitions were sent with our expedition to France after the outbreak of the war. The idea of violating the neutrality of Belgium was never discussed or contemplated by the British Government.²¹

²¹ B. G. B., appendix 6, enclosures 1, 3.

Mr. Alexander Fuehr, in his book on the neutrality of Bel-

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gium, says that German officials took many affidavits of French captives to the effect that French troops had invaded Belgium on July 31. Three of these affidavits are given at length in the appendix. They state that several French regiments had crossed the Belgian frontier on that date. It is needless to say, however, that such evidence is of little, if any, value.—Fuehr, 230-235.

CHAPTER XI

JAPAN AND TURKEY DRAWN INTO THE CONFLICT

WHEN the great European conflict broke out, Germany held Kiaochou, a district on the northern coast of China. She had gotten possession of this territory by first seizing (1897) and then leasing it from China. The murder of two German missionaries by the Chinese had furnished the occasion for thus getting a foothold in the Far East. Nor were the Germans slow to take advantage of the good fortune that had placed this territory in their possession. The city of Tsingtau, in this district, was modernized and strongly fortified by them and thus made into an important naval base. All of this was calculated to excite the jealousy and rivalry of Japan.

Now, Japan was a power that had to be reckoned with in the Far East, not only because of her own strength but also because that strength had been doubled by an alliance with England. The first treaty between these two countries was signed in 1902, and had been renewed in 1905 and again in 1911. The object

of the alliance was to maintain "the general peace in the regions of eastern Asia and of India," and to insure "the independence and integrity of the Chinese Empire and the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations in China." Each of the contracting parties was bound to assist the other if it should become "involved in a war concerning these matters" with two nations at once. If either ally should be at war with only one power, the other should remain neutral.¹

When the European war first broke out, Japan expressed the hope (August 4, 1914) that it would be confined to Europe and that she would be able to maintain a strict neutrality. She declared, however, at this early date, that "in the event of Great Britain becoming involved in the conflict and the object of the Anglo-Japanese Agreement of Alliance be at stake, Japan may take such measures as are necessary to fulfill her obligations under that Agreement."² Germany on August 12 announced to the Japanese Government that her East Asiatic squadron had been "instructed to avoid hostile acts against England in case Japan remains neutral."³

¹ See Hazen, 700. For the full text of the treaty of 1911, see Publications of Amer. Ass'n. for Inter. Conciliation, Series No. III, Document No. 85, pp. 29-30.

² Inter. Conciliation, No. 85, p. 33.

³ S., 814.

The account of Japan's subsequent action can best be given in the words of Baron Kato, her minister for foreign affairs. In a speech before the Imperial Diet, September 5, 1914, he said in part:

It is plain from the foregoing statement that the Imperial Government from the outset earnestly hoped that the effect of the European war would not extend over to the Far East. As was related above, however, Great Britain was at last compelled to take part in the contest, and early in August the British Government asked the Imperial Government for assistance under the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Agreement of Alliance. German men-of-war and armed vessels were then prowling the seas of Eastern Asia to the serious menace of our commerce and that of our Ally, while in Kiaochow, her leased territory in China, Germany was busy with warlike preparations, apparently with the purpose of making it the base of her warlike operations in Eastern Asia. Grave anxiety was thus felt as to the maintenance of the peace of the Far East.

As you are all aware the Agreement of Alliance between Japan and Great Britain has for its object, the consolidation and maintenance of the general peace in Eastern Asia, insuring the independence and integrity of China as well as the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations in that country, and the maintenance and defense respectively of the territorial rights and of the special interests of the contracting parties in Eastern Asia. Therefore inasmuch as she is asked by her Ally for assistance at the time when the commerce in Eastern Asia, which Japan and Great Britain regard alike as one of their special interests, is subjected to constant menace, Japan, which regards that alliance as

the guiding principle of her foreign policy, cannot but comply with such request and do her part. Besides in the opinion of the Government the possession by Germany, whose interests are opposed to those of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, of a base of her powerful activities in one corner of the Far East is not only a serious obstacle to the maintenance of permanent peace of Eastern Asia, but is also in conflict with the more immediate interests of our own Empire. The Government, therefore, resolved to comply with the British request and if necessary in doing so to open hostilities against Germany and after the Imperial sanction was obtained, they communicated this resolution to the British Government. Full and frank exchange of views between the two Governments followed and it was finally agreed between them to take such measures as may be necessary to protect the general interest contemplated by the Agreement of Alliance.

Japan had no desire or inclination to get herself involved in the present conflict. She only believed that she owed it to herself to be faithful to the Alliance and strengthen its foundation by ensuring the permanent peace of the East and by protecting the special interests of our two allied Powers. Desiring, however, to solve the situation by pacific means, the Imperial Government gave on August 15th the following advice to the German Government:

“Considering it highly important and necessary, in the present situation, to take measures to remove all causes of disturbance to the peace of the Far East and to safeguard the general interests contemplated by the Agreement of Alliance between Japan and Great Britain, in order to secure a firm and enduring peace in Eastern Asia, establishment of which is the aim of the said Agreement, the Imperial Japanese Government sincerely believe it their duty to give advice to the Imperial German Government to carry out the following two propositions:

"1st. To withdraw immediately from the Japanese and Chinese waters German men-of-war and armed vessels of all kinds, and to disarm at once those which cannot be so withdrawn.

"2nd. To deliver on a date not later than September 15, 1914, to the Imperial Japanese Authorities, without condition or compensation, the entire leased territory of Kiaochow with a view to eventual restoration of same to China.

"The Imperial Japanese Government announce, at the same time, that, in the event of their not receiving by noon August 23, 1914, the answer of the Imperial German Government signifying an unconditional acceptance of the above advice offered by the Imperial Japanese Government, they will be compelled to take such action as they may deem necessary to meet the situation." ⁴

The time limit of the ultimatum expired at noon August 23. According to Baron Kato's statement, the Japanese Government had received no answer from Germany up to the last moment. The German Government did, however, on the 23rd state orally to the Japanese chargé d'affaires that it had "no reply to make to the demands of Japan." Diplomatic negotiations were at once broken off, and war was declared by Japan on the same day.⁵ Four days later Austria-Hungary broke relations with Japan by recalling her ambassador from Tokio.⁶

At the beginning of the war "the English

⁴ Inter. Con., No. 85, pp. 33-35.

⁵ G. W. B., 30.

⁶ A. R. B., 69.

Government ordered the seizure of two dread-noughts that were being built for Turkey in British yards." Turkey regarded this as an unfriendly act, especially as she had made great sacrifices for this addition to the strength of her navy, having borrowed money for it at the rate of twenty per cent. Turkish women had even sold their hair to help secure funds for the construction of these war-ships. The people had "made such great sacrifices because they regarded these vessels as agencies through which Turkey was to attack Greece and win back the islands of the *Ægean*." They were, therefore, very much incensed at the loss of these dread-noughts, though the legal right of the English Government to requisition them was beyond dispute.

Britain maintained that she needed these vessels for her own protection, but would reimburse the Ottoman Government for all financial losses entailed by their seizure and, furthermore, would return them at the end of the war. The British ambassador at Constantinople, apparently, did not feel right over this act of his Government, for he spoke of it as "Turkey's one concrete and substantial grievance against Great Britain."⁷

⁷ B. C. (13), 1, 2, 4, 34; B. C. (14), p. 3; R. O. B. (2), 10; Turkish Official Documents, Inter. Conciliation, pamphlet 86, p. 5.

Despite this alleged grievance, the Porte announced its intention to remain neutral. Mobilization had been decided upon early in August, but this had been done, it was said, "only because it would take months to complete, and because the Government wished not to be taken by surprise in case of aggression by Bulgaria, though they had also been alarmed by rumors of action by Russia."⁸ Great Britain promised (August 7) that if neutrality were maintained by the Ottoman Government she would not "alter the status of Egypt" provided Egypt should remain quiet and "no unforeseen circumstances" should arise.⁹

This policy of neutrality was soon subjected to a severe strain. On August 10 two German warships, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, to find shelter from attack by the Allied fleet, came into the Dardanelles. Sir Edward Grey demanded that these ships be forbidden to remain in Turkish waters longer than twenty-four hours or else be interned. Instead of intern-ing them, the Ottoman Government contended that it had bought them and promised to allow the officers and crews to return to Germany.

⁸ B. C. (13), 3.

According to Mr. Morgenthau, former American ambassador at Constantinople, the mobilization of the Turkish forces was carried on under the direction of German generals acting on instructions from Berlin. *World's Work*, June, 1918, pp. 158, 160.

⁹ B. C. (13), 5.

The grand vizier said that the "purchase was due to our [England's] detention of *Sultan Osman* [one of the ships taken over by the Government]. They must have ships to bargain with regard to question of the islands on equal terms with Greece, and it was in no way directed against Russia." Sir Edward Grey was willing to acquiesce in the transfer, provided it was *bona fide* and the crews were returned to Germany at once. The sale was, however, not *bona fide*, but was only a sham transaction arranged by Baron Wangenheim, the German ambassador. That such was the case was virtually admitted by both Baron Wangenheim and Talaat Pasha, the "boss of Turkey."¹⁰

The grand vizier contended that Turkey did not have enough sailors to man these boats until her transport returned from London. He promised that if he were given a little time gradually he would get rid of the German crews. The whole trouble, he said, was caused by the seizure of the Ottoman war-ships by the British Government. As England had not paid for the vessels, his people looked upon the act as robbery and as an indication that she intended "to assist Greece in aggressive designs against Turkey."¹¹

¹⁰ B. C. (13), 8, 9, 11; *World's Work*, June, 1918, pp. 166, 168.

¹¹ B. C. (13), 20.

The grand vizier, however, was unable to make good his pledge that the German crews would gradually be sent home. On the contrary, the Germans on the *Goeben* and *Breslau* were reënforced by others who came from time to time and found places in the navy and the forts in strategic positions near Constantinople. German gold and war materials also were sent to the Turkish capital. The Ottoman Government was thus, in the opinion of the British and American ambassadors, entirely under the control of the Teutonic foreigners.¹²

The British foreign office was very patient with the grand vizier despite his failure to make good his promises. The British and Russian ambassadors believed that he was sincere and really desirous of maintaining neutrality, but that he was not able to take a determined stand against the Germans. The Sultan, "a majority of the ministry, and a considerable section of the Committee of Union and Progress" were, in the opinion of the English ambassador, "opposed to so desperate an adventure as war with the Allies." But Enver Pasha, the minister of war, seemed to be the dominating influence in the ministry and he was for war. "Dominated by a quasi-Napoleonic ideal, by political Pan-Islamism, and

¹² R. O. B. (2), 36, 37, 39, 76, 86, 87, 88; B. C. (13), 31, 39, 40, 43, 46, 47, 76; B. C. (14), pp. 2, 3, 4; Turk. Doc.; *World's Work*, June, 1918, pp. 174, 176.

by a conviction of the superiority of the German arms, [he] was from the first a strong partisan of the German alliance."¹³

The press was also very hostile to the English. As the country was under martial law, the press was under a censorship, and, therefore, its utterances might be taken as an expression of the sentiments of the Government. Sir Louis Mallet, British ambassador at Constantinople, complained that not only was news in favor of the Allies suppressed, but that slander and vituperation against the Entente was indulged in without censorial restraint. The newspapers, not only of the capital but also of the provinces, were "enthusiastically pro-German."

The hostility of the Turkish press to the Entente powers was not, according to Ambassador Morgenthau, a reflection of public sentiment, for he is of the opinion that a majority of the people were more kindly disposed to England and France than to Germany. But Baron Wangenheim, by a judicious and unscrupulous use of money, had won over the press to the support of Germany. "A censorship was established in the interest of the Central Powers" and "all Turkish editors were ordered to write in Germany's favor." German agents were carrying on an unbridled propaganda

¹³ R. O. B. (2), 36; B. C. (14), p. 1.

through the press and other agencies against the Entente powers.¹⁴

The Germans were, of course, trying to do all they could to bring Turkey into the war on their side. In support of their propaganda, they used, according to the contention of Sir Louis Mallet, such arguments as the following:

German success in the European war was said to be assured. The perpetual menace to Turkey from Russia might, it was suggested, be averted by a timely alliance with Germany and Austria. Egypt might be recovered for the Empire. India and other Moslem countries represented as groaning under Christian rule might be kindled into a flame of infinite possibilities for the Caliphate of Constantinople. Turkey would emerge from the war the one great Power of the East, even as Germany would be the one great Power of the West. Such was the substance of German misrepresentations.¹⁵

¹⁴ B. C. (13), 147, enclosure 1; B. C. (13), p. 3; *World's Work*, June, 1918, p. 175.

The Russian ambassador at Constantinople said (September 14) that he had information to the effect that the leading papers of the Turkish capital were subsidized by Germany and Austria-Hungary. R. O. B. (2), 53.

¹⁵ B. C. (14), p. 1; R. O. B. (2), 75.

Mr. Morgenthau thinks that prior to the battle of the Marne Germany did not want Turkey to enter the war and quotes Ambassador Wangenheim as saying that his country preferred that Turkey remain neutral. The Germans were at that time counting on a short war and did not want to be hampered by obligations to the Porte. But after the battle of the Marne, when the Teutons had lost the hope of a speedy victory, they wanted the active help of the Ottoman Empire. Then it was that Baron Wangenheim used the power that he had built up in Constantinople in favor of enlisting the active support of the Ottoman Government on the side of the Teutonic Allies *World's Work*, June, 1918, 173-4, 178.

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Great Britain, on the other hand, could not hold out such glowing prospects as an inducement for neutrality. In fact, it seems that the Entente powers made little or no effort at bargaining with the Porte. Besides, there seems to have been a fear on the part of the Turkish people that Britain had designs against the integrity and independence of their country. To alleviate these fears, Sir Edward Grey directed Sir Louis Mallet "to address the following communication to the Porte" "as soon as the French and Russian ambassadors have received similar instructions":

If the Turkish Government will repatriate immediately the German officers and crews of the *Goeben* and *Breslau*, will give a written assurance that all facilities shall be furnished for the peaceful and uninterrupted passage of merchant vessels, and that all the obligations of neutrality shall be observed by Turkey during the present war, the three allied Powers will in return agree, with regard to the Capitulations, to withdraw their extra-territorial jurisdiction as soon as a scheme of judicial administration, which will satisfy modern conditions, is set up.

They will further give a joint guarantee in writing that they will respect the independence and integrity of Turkey, and will engage that no conditions in the terms of peace at the end of the war shall prejudice this independence and integrity."

This communication was delivered by the ambassadors of all three of the Entente powers; but the Turkish Government, it seems,

"attached no importance to the statement."¹⁶

On September 9 the Ottoman Government issued a statement to the powers declaring the Capitulations to be abolished after October 1.¹⁷ Thereupon, the ambassadors of the powers, including Austria-Hungary and Germany, "sent identic notes to the Sublime Porte stating that . . . capitulatory régime . . . cannot be abolished . . . without consent of contracting parties." Therefore, "we cannot recognize executory force after that date (October 1) of unilateral decision of the Sublime Porte." Sir Edward Grey, however, said (September 16) that he was "prepared to consider reasonable concessions about Capitulations," as long as Turkey maintained neutrality. Russia was also willing to agree to concessions as to the Capitulations provided Turkey would demobilize and send away the German military officers.¹⁸

¹⁶ B. C. (13), 21, 27, 28, 64; R. O. B. (2), 35.

The Turkish cabinet seemed to put little faith in Entente pledges respecting the future integrity of the Ottoman Empire. In discussing these pledges with Ambassador Morgenthau, Talaat Pasha said: "They promised that we should not be dismembered after the Balkan wars, and see what happened to European Turkey then." *World's Work*, June, 1918, p. 175.

¹⁷ The Capitulations were agreements that had been entered into by Turkey with the various European powers granting to the nationals of the latter who reside in the Ottoman dominions "liberty of residence and of travel, inviolability of domicile, freedom of religion, and, to a certain extent, the right to be tried by courts of their own nationality."—*Inter-Year Book*.

¹⁸ B. C. (13), 73, 77; R. O. B. (2), 55, 56.

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England's forbearance toward Turkey continued despite the fact that the German crews still remained with the two vessels alleged to have been purchased from Germany, and also despite the fact that the British ambassador was satisfied that the so-called sale was fictitious. Besides, the Entente powers had other grievances against the Porte. English merchant ships had been illegally detained in the Dardanelles,¹⁹ and a German ship "anchored opposite the German embassy at Therapia" had been used as a wireless station by the Teutons.²⁰

On September 27 Turkey committed a more important breach of neutrality. The Ottoman military authorities on that date closed the Dardanelles, giving as a reason that the "sudden actions of [the] British fleet had given rise to the belief that an immediate attack was contemplated." The Entente ambassadors at Constantinople protested to the grand vizier against this action and the English ambassador assured him that any such belief was unfounded and expressed the wish that the Dardanelles be opened at once.²¹ The grand vizier offered to reopen the straits if the British fleet would "move a little farther from the entrance to the

¹⁹ B. C. (13), 12, 26, 34.

²⁰ B. C. (14), p. 2; *World's Work*, June, 1918, 158-160.

²¹ B. C. (13), 97; R. O. B. (2), 68.

Dardanelles.”²² This Sir Edward Grey was unwilling to consent to, as long as “German officers and men remain in Turkish waters and are in control of [the] Turkish fleet.”²³

The real reason, however, for closing the straits was, in the opinion of Mr. Morgenthau, that Germany had now decided to bring Turkey into the war and this was the first step toward the accomplishment of that purpose. At this time Turkey was no longer mistress of her own house but was receiving orders from her Teutonic masters. The Germans had strengthened the fortifications at the Dardanelles and Baron Wangenheim had boasted that he could close the straits in thirty minutes. The order for closing the Dardanelles was issued by a German general without consulting the Ottoman authorities. The Turkish cabinet had had nothing to do with the order given by the German general, if we are to credit a statement made by the minister of finance. “It’s all a surprise to us,” he said to the American ambassador when the latter protested against the closing of the straits. Ambassador Morgenthau, on whose authority these statements are made, represents the Ottoman cabinet as reluctantly acquiescing in the bullying policy imposed upon it by Germany.²⁴

²² B. C. (13), 98.

²³ B. C. (13), 102.

²⁴ *World's Work*, June, 1918, 177-8.

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One serious cause of trouble between the Porte and the British Government was the preparations alleged to have been made by the former for attacking Egypt. The Ottoman Government contended that the military preparations in Syria were only a part of the general mobilization movement, "having no other object than to put Turkey on a footing to defend her neutrality." The Porte also declared that Great Britain had aroused anxiety among the Turks as to the observance of her pledge regarding Egypt because she had declared that province in a state of war and had brought in troops from India.²⁵ When Bedouins crossed (October 28) the Egyptian frontier, the grand vizier declared that he did not believe the report, but that "if it were true he would give immediate orders for [the] recall of [the] Bedouins."²⁶

²⁵ B. C. (13), 118, 149.

²⁶ Sir Edward Grey gave the following as a summary of the preparations for an attack on Egypt made by the Turkish Government:

The Mosul and Damascus Army Corps have, since their mobilization, been constantly sending troops south preparatory to an invasion of Egypt and the Suez Canal from Akaba and Gaza. A large body of Bedouin Arabs has been called out and armed to assist in this venture. Transport has been collected and roads have been prepared up to the frontier of Egypt. Mines have been dispatched to be laid in the Gulf of Akaba to protect the force from naval attack, and the notorious Sheikh Aziz Shawish, who has been so well known as a firebrand in raising Moslem feeling against Christians, has published and disseminated through Syria, and probably India, an inflammatory document urging Mohammedans to fight against Great Britain. Dr. Prüfer, who was so long

Notwithstanding these assurances, the Ottoman Government seemed anxious to recover its authority over Egypt. The minister of marine told the French ambassador (October 22) that the Turks felt about Egypt as the "French did about Alsace-Lorraine," and that while "they would do nothing officially," yet they "would shut their eyes to any agitation which was directed against English occupation of Egypt."²⁷

While relations between Turkey and Great Britain were thus strained almost to the breaking point, a new cause of trouble arose between the Porte and the Russian Government. On the morning of October 29, "two or three Turkish torpedo boats raided Odessa harbor and sank" one Russian gunboat and damaged one French and three other Russian boats.²⁸ The grand vizier contended that the Russian fleet had provoked the attack. This the Russian foreign office "categorically denied," and the British ambassador said that he had proof that the orders for the attack had been given on October 27 and that these orders came "as the result of a conspiracy hatched between the German representatives in Constantinople and a

engaged in intrigues in Cairo against the British occupation, and is now attached to the German Embassy in Constantinople, has been busily occupied in Syria trying to incite the people to take part in this conflict. B. C. (13), 166, 169, 173, 176.

²⁷ B. C. (13), 164.

²⁸ B. C. (13), 178; R. O. B. (2), 91.

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small and unscrupulous Turkish faction.”²⁹

This statement of Sir Louis Mallet as to Germany's responsibility for the raid on Odessa is confirmed by important evidence furnished by the American ambassador. On the day of the attack (but before it was made) Talaat Pasha told Mr. Morgenthau that Turkey had decided to cast in her lot with Germany and admitted that fear was the motive that had prompted this decision. He believed that Germany would win the war and in that event Turkey would fare badly at her hands if she had declined to help win the victory. Besides, the alliance with Germany afforded an opportunity to wreak revenge on Russia. But both Talaat and the minister of marine declared that they knew nothing beforehand of the plan to attack Odessa and the latter put the whole responsibility on the German Admiral Souchon. Mr. Morgenthau adds that the ships which made the raid were commanded by German officers and manned almost entirely by German crews.³⁰

On November 1 the Turkish chargé d'affaires at St. Petersburg read to M. Sazonof, the Russian foreign minister, a telegram from the grand vizier, which contained the following statement:

Convey to the Minister of Foreign Affairs our in-

²⁹ R. O. B. (2), 97; B. C. (14), p. 5.

³⁰ *World's Work*, June, 1918, 182-3.

finite regret that an act of hostility, provoked by the Russian fleet, has compromised friendly relations between the two countries.

You may assure the Imperial Russian Government that the Sublime Porte will not fail to give an appropriate solution to this question, and that it will adopt all means necessary to prevent the possible recurrence of similar events.

You may at once declare to the Minister of Foreign Affairs that we have decided not to allow the Imperial fleet further passage into the Black Sea, and that we hope that the Russian fleet, on its part, will not further come to cruise in our waters.

Sazonof's reply was, in part, as follows:

I replied to the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires that I categorically denied that the hostile initiative was taken by our fleet. Further, that I feared that it is now too late, anyhow, to make any sort of negotiations. If Turkey had announced the immediate expulsion of all German soldiers and sailors, it might then still have been possible to enter into negotiations looking to reparation for the treacherous attack upon our coast and the damages caused thereby. I added that the communication presented by him in no wise affected the situation that had arisen.⁸¹

It was now too late to negotiate, as M. Sazonof had observed, for the Entente ambassadors had asked for their passports and two days before had had their final interview with the grand vizier.⁸²

⁸¹ R. O. B. (2), 97.

⁸² R. O. B. (2), 90, 91, 94, 98; B. C. (13), 180.

CHAPTER XII

ITALY ENTERS THE WAR

FOR more than a decade preceding the war, the ties holding Italy to the Triple Alliance had been weakening. The feeling of coolness between Italy and her allies was increased by the former's support of France against Germany in the Algeiras Conference of 1906. The Turco-Italian War of 1911-12, by which Italy gained Tripoli and Cyenaica, also loosened to some extent the bond that held her to the Triple Alliance. The effect of this war was to weaken Turkey at a time when it was Germany's policy to strengthen her. It is true that the Teutonic Governments did not protest against Italy's action except that Austria-Hungary declared that she would regard an Italian attack on European Turkey as a violation of Article VII of the Treaty of the Triple Alliance;¹ but the attitude of the press showed that the course of Italy met with disapproval in both Teutonic countries. Besides, Italy's imperialistic aspirations were encouraged by the success of this

¹ I. G. B., 6.

war, and these aspirations crossed the line of Austrian ambition in the Balkans. A more cordial feeling had also grown up between Italy and France, which had found expression in political and economic understandings at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century.

During the negotiations preceding the outbreak of August, 1914, Italy showed herself anxious for the maintenance of peace, and readily supported the proposals made to that end. When her partners in the Triple Alliance went to war with the other powers, she remained neutral, contending that her obligations by the terms of the alliance bound her to act not in an aggressive but only in a defensive war. In her opinion, this was not only an aggressive war, but the steps leading to it had been taken without her advice or knowledge; for she had been kept in the dark as to the demands that would be made by Austria on Serbia until just before the ultimatum reached Belgrade.²

Not only did Italy excuse herself for not having aided her allies, but she went further and charged that Austria-Hungary by invading Serbia without her previous consent had violated Article VII of the Treaty of Alliance. As early as July 25, 1914, her ambassador at Vienna, acting on instructions from the foreign

² F. Y. B., 26, 51; B. W. P., 152; R. O. B. (2), 4, 17, 22.

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office, declared to the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister that Italy would have a claim to compensation under the terms of Article VII if Austria should occupy Serbian territory. A few days later the Government raised the question both at Vienna and Berlin as to whether the Italian-speaking provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire would be ceded to Italy, and threatened to withdraw from the Triple Alliance "if adequate compensation were not obtained."³

³ I. G. B., 3; A. R. B. (2), 9. See also speech of Premier Antonio Salandra, made June 2, 1915.

The following articles of the Treaty of Triple Alliance show whether Italy was obligated under the terms of the treaty to come to the aid of Austria-Hungary and whether Austria-Hungary owed Italy compensation because of the former's invasion of Serbia.

Article III. If one or two of the high contracting parties should be attacked without direct provocation on their part, and be engaged in war with two or several Great Powers not signatory to this Treaty, the *casus foederis* shall apply simultaneously to all the high contracting parties.

Article IV. In the event that a Great Power not signatory to this Treaty should menace the safety of the states of one of the high contracting parties, and that the menaced party should be forced to make war on that Power, the two others bind themselves to observe toward their ally a benevolent neutrality. Each one of them in that case reserves to herself the right to participate in the war, if she should consider it appropriate to make common cause with her ally.

Article VII. Austria-Hungary and Italy, being desirous solely that the territorial *status quo* in the near East be maintained as much as possible, pledge themselves to exert their influence to prevent all territorial modification which may prove detrimental to one or the other of the Powers signatory to this treaty. To that end they shall communicate to one another all such information as may be suitable for their mutual enlightenment, concerning their own dispositions as well as those of other Powers. Should, however, the *status quo* in the regions of the Balkans, or of the Turkish coasts and

Count Berchtold, the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister, had expected that the Italian Government would demand compensation, and as early as July 20 he advised the Austro-Hungarian ambassador at Rome as to his interpretation of Article VII. According to his view, the phrase, "in the regions of the Balkans," referred only to Turkish possessions, and, therefore, a military occupation of Serbian territory would not give Italy a right to compensation. Italy's interpretation, however, was upheld by Germany, and by July 31 Count Berchtold was willing to accept Italy's interpretation of Article VII, provided the latter power would "observe a friendly attitude toward the pending operations of war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia" and would "carry out her duties as an ally in case the present conflict should lead to a general conflagration." The Italian Government took the position that the interpretation of the treaty was not subject to conditions and declined to pledge its neutrality on such terms.⁴

islands in the Adriatic and Ægean seas in the course of events become impossible; and should Austria-Hungary or Italy be placed under the necessity, either by the action of a third Power or otherwise, to modify that *status quo* by a temporary or permanent occupation on their part, such occupation shall take place only after a previous agreement has been made between the two Powers, based on the principle of reciprocal compensation for all advantages, territorial or otherwise, which either of them may obtain beyond the present *status quo*, a compensation which shall satisfy the legitimate interests and

aspirations of both parties. S., 335-6, 346.

⁴ A. R. B. (2), 2, enclosure; 15, 16, 25, 26.

Later (August 22), the German foreign office advised Austria-Hungary to accept unreservedly Italy's interpretation of Article VII. Three days later the Austrian and German ambassadors at Rome announced for their Governments an unqualified acceptance of the Italian interpretation of the phrase "in the regions of the Balkans." Count Berchtold also said that this declaration implied a willingness on his part "to enter into negotiations with Italy concerning compensation in the case of a temporary or permanent occupation of territory in the Balkans by [Austria-Hungary]."⁵

Discussions relative to this point seem to have fallen into abeyance for a few months but were renewed in December, when, according to the claim of Baron Sonnino, Italian foreign minister, a new situation had been created by the Austro-Hungarian invasion of Serbia without a previous agreement with Italy. A serious effort was now begun to induce the Teutonic powers to compensate Italy for the disturbance of the equilibrium in the Balkans occasioned by the Austrian invasion of Serbia. The Government took the position that "it could never allow the integrity and political and economical independence of Serbia to be jeopardized, as this was contrary to our [its] interests as well as to the disposition of the treaty."⁶

⁵ A. R. B. (2), 42, 44, 45.

⁶ I. G. B., 3, 6; A. R. B. (2), 74, 75.

At first Count Berchtold was not willing to allow any compensation to Italy, contending that the occupation of Serbia was neither permanent nor even temporary, but only "momentary." Afterwards (December 20), Count Berchtold expressed his willingness to negotiate as to the compensation due Italy "in case of temporary or permanent occupations in the Balkans by Austria-Hungary." This change of heart had, according to evidence received by the Italian ambassador at Vienna, been brought about as a result of advice from Germany.⁷

The principle of compensation having been yielded by Austria-Hungary, it looked as if an agreement might be reached. To render the negotiations as smooth as possible, Germany sent Prince von Bülow, the ex-chancellor, as ambassador extraordinary to Rome.

The questions yet to be settled were the amount and location of the territory to be given and the time of payment. Baron Sonnino let it be known that he would not accept territory

Count Berchtold expressed surprise at this attitude; for he claims that Marquis di San Giuliano, Sonnino's predecessor, had given him assurances "that Italy would not impede Austria's military operations," and he only wanted Austria to recognize the "applicability of Article VII to the present situation."

⁷ I. G. B., 3, 4, 5, 7; A. R. B. (2), 75, 78.

It ought to be said in this connection that Count Berchtold, as early as December 13, telegraphed to the Austrian representative at Rome that he had "no material objection" to entering upon negotiations with the Italian Government with reference to a possible compensation. A. R. B. (2), 76.

that had to be taken from the Entente Allies, as "this would be equal to taking part in the conflict."⁸ Baron Macchio, now Austro-Hungarian representative at Rome, hinted at "compensations with regard to Albania, a country so near Italy and so easily accessible." Baron Sonnino replied that Italy had only a negative interest in Albania—she was only concerned in keeping other powers out; besides, the acceptance of territory here would embroil her unnecessarily in the Balkan troubles and win for her the lasting enmity of Serbia and Bulgaria. He said that Austria-Hungary ought to cede to his country the Italian-speaking districts now belonging to the Dual Monarchy. Prince von Bülow was in favor of the cession of Trentino and said that "Germany was sending to Vienna Count Wedel . . . with the intent of inducing the Austrian Government to give the Trentino to Italy." He thought, however, that Italy should not ask for more, for he believed that Austria would go to war rather than surrender Trieste.⁹ Austria-Hungary was naturally loth to part with her possessions and Baron Burian, her foreign minister, expressed (January 18) surprise that Italy should raise such an embarrassing question; he still thought that she ought to be will-

⁸ I. G. B., 10.

⁹ I. G. B., 8, 10, 11; A. R. B. (2), 90, 98, enclosure.

ing to "accept a discussion regarding the compensations relating to territories possessed by other warring states." ¹⁰

On January 26 Prince von Bülow asked Italy to formulate her demands. This the Italian foreign minister was unwilling to do until Austria-Hungary had accepted "explicitly and definitely that the discussions bear on the ground of the cession of territory now possessed by the [Austro-Hungarian] Empire." ¹¹ The Austro-Hungarian Government hesitated, neither accepting nor rejecting the basis of discussion demanded by Italy.

The negotiations were further complicated by the demand made by Austria-Hungary on Italy for compensation under Article VII for the occupation of Valona and the retention of the Ægean Islands. Italy denied the right of compensation because of her action in reference to these places and undertook to justify it on the ground that the "occupation of Valona had been caused by the general state of disorder which reigned in Albania," and that the Ægean Islands were retained because Turkey had not yet complied with all the terms of the treaty of Lausanne. Besides, she contended that Aus-

¹⁰ I. G. B., 12.

¹¹ I. G. B., 15; A. R. B. (2), 99.

The Austro-Hungarian foreign minister spoke of Italy's "preposterous" request as a demand for "a slice of our own flesh."

tria-Hungary had waived all her claim to compensation; for on May 27, 1912, her foreign minister had declared that he "would not avail himself in this instance of the right of compensation which was due him," provided Italy would not seize any more of the islands. In deference to this request, Italy had refrained from seizing any of the other islands, though the strategic reasons for doing so were very strong.

After having made this defense, Baron Sonnino, on February 12, withdrew all the proposals made, declaring that his Government would "intrench itself in the simple interpretation of Article VII, declaring that it considers as openly contrary to the very article whatever military action Austria-Hungary would make from now on in the Balkans." This was a threat to withdraw from the Triple Alliance if the Austro-Hungarian Government should again attack Serbia before an agreement as to compensations had been concluded.¹²

While the question of the cession of Austro-Hungarian territory was still unsettled a new

¹² Austria-Hungary contended that Count Berchtold's statement "that he would not have availed himself in this instance of the right of compensation which was due him" ought to be interpreted in the sense that he did not intend to avail himself of the right of compensation at the moment in which the occupation of the islands had occurred . . . but that he reserved to avail himself of that right at an opportune moment." I. G. B., 20, 21, 22, 23, 24; A. R. B. (2), 95, enclosure, 104, 106, 109, enclosure; S., 345.

difficulty arose. Austria-Hungary claimed that the agreement as to compensation might be initiated before but could not be consummated until after the campaign against Serbia was over, as it could not be determined until then how much Austria-Hungary would profit by the military operations. Italy contended (February 22) that Article VII spoke of a "previous agreement," which could only mean a definite understanding before military operations were begun. Any other construction would leave her without any guarantee that the agreement initiated before the campaign would be satisfactorily concluded after it. Germany agreed with Italy in her interpretation of this part of Article VII, and "strongly intervened at Vienna to favor an understanding between Austria-Hungary and Italy."¹³ It was doubtless in consequence of this intervention that Austria-Hungary announced (March 9) her willingness to enter upon negotiations "on the basis of cession of Austrian territory."¹⁴

The people in Italy were almost unanimous in the conviction that the Government must use this opportunity for enabling their country to realize its national ambitions. The press was now clamoring for war. The *Giornale d'Italia* declared (March 7) that it would "be extremely

¹³ I. G. B., 27, 31, 38; A. R. B. (2), 109, enclosure.

¹⁴ I. G. B., 39; A. R. B. (2), 115.

difficult for Italy longer to remain neutral." Baron Sonnino had in his negotiations with Austria-Hungary more than once spoken of the national aspirations of the Italian people and the impossibility of the Government's carrying out a policy in opposition to these aspirations. It would, therefore, naturally be expected that Austria would have to come to Italy's terms if neutrality were to be maintained.

On March 10 the Italian foreign minister stated that he was willing to specify the demands of Italy as soon as Austria-Hungary should accept certain conditions which he laid down as bases for negotiations. One of these was the provision that "when the accord shall be concluded it shall take immediate effect."¹⁵

This, the most important of the three conditions, was not accepted by Austria-Hungary. Baron Burian said (March 13) "that it would be impossible for the Imperial and Royal [Austro-Hungarian] Government to admit the passing on of any territories of the monarchy before the conclusion of peace." He also still held that Austria had a claim to compensation because of the Italian occupation of Valona and the Ægean Islands. Italy, however, positively declined to allow the last-named question to come up for discussion.¹⁶ Austria pointed out

¹⁵ I. G. B., 42.

¹⁶ I. G. B., 43, 44; A. R. B. (2), 117, enclosure.

that there were very serious obstacles to the transfer of any of her territory to Italy in time of war.

Germany, although she had up to this time been urging Austria-Hungary to yield, thought that Italy was asking too much. She promised to guarantee that "the agreement to be concluded between Italy and Austria-Hungary will be put into execution faithfully and loyally immediately after the conclusion of peace,"¹⁷

Italy, however, feared that the Austrian and Hungarian Parliaments would not confirm the cession of territory after the war was over, when she would have no means of compelling compliance with the terms of the agreement. As to the guarantee of Germany, she considered it "valuable in the case of a victorious Germany, which presupposes also a victorious Austria, but would have less value in case both should be defeated."¹⁸ Baron Sonnino said that "the expectation of an immediate execution would strongly influence public opinion toward moderation in the demands of the cessions, while any delay would encourage larger demands." In short, he was offering Austria a discount for cash.¹⁹ Baron Burian tried to allay Sonnino's fears regarding the future actions of the Austrian and Hungarian Parlia-

¹⁷ I. G. B., 46; A. R. B. (2), 125, 128.

¹⁸ I. G. B., 46, 53; A. R. B. (2), 121.

¹⁹ I. G. B., 52.

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ments by declaring that "they could not reject an act which had taken place under the ample power possessed by his Majesty the Emperor." ²⁰

As they were deadlocked on this point, Prince von Bülow suggested that they take up the other question as to the amount of compensation, leaving this one in abeyance without prejudice.²¹ This was done and Austria-Hungary made (March 27) an offer of the terms on which she was willing to purchase the neutrality of Italy.²² These terms being regarded as vague and unsatisfactory by Italy, she was invited to make counter-proposals.²³ Thereupon Baron Sonnino (April 8, 1915) formulated conditions that would be acceptable to his country. They were in part as follows:

(1) Austria-Hungary to cede "the Trentino to Italy, with the boundaries which the Italian realm had in 1811."

(2) The boundary between Italy and Austria to be corrected, "the cities of Gradisca and Goriza being comprised in the ceded territory."

(3) "The city of Trieste with its territory" to be "constituted into an autonomous and independent state."

²⁰ I. G. B., 51.

²¹ I. G. B., 50; A. R. B. (2), 121.

²² I. G. B., 56; A. R. B. (2), 131.

²³ I. G. B., 58, 62; A. R. B. (2), 134, 138.

(4) Austria-Hungary to cede "to Italy the group of the Curzolari Islands."

(5) Italy to "occupy at once the territories . . . ceded to her"; "Trieste and her territory" to be cleared immediately "of the Austro-Hungarian authorities and troops."

(6) Austria-Hungary to acknowledge "the full sovereignty of Italy on Valona and her bay, including Sasseno, with as much territory in the 'Hinterland' as may be requested for their defense."

(7) Austria-Hungary to renounce "completely every interest in Albania."

There were also some minor clauses contained in articles 8 and 9.

For these concessions Italy agreed to bind herself during the present war "to preserve a perfect neutrality with regard to Austria-Hungary and Germany" and to renounce "any right to further invoke, for her own advantage, the dispositions of Article VII of the Treaty of the Triple Alliance," provided "Austria-Hungary makes the same renunciation for all that may regard the Italian occupation of the Islands of the Dodekanese [the *Ægean Islands*]." ²⁴

Austria-Hungary was willing to cede "all the districts which form what is commonly called the Trentino," but would not agree to the

²⁴ I. G. B., 64; A. R. B. (2), 141.

boundary for these districts laid down by the Italian proposals.²⁵ In his reply to Italy's proposals, Baron Burian, Austro-Hungarian foreign minister, objected to "a change in the frontier line toward the Isonzo," as this "would render difficult the military defense of that part of the [Austro-Hungarian] Monarchy's frontier, and would place the frontier of Italy too near to the city of Trieste. To detach this city from Austria-Hungary would deprive the latter of its most important center of maritime traffic and put in possession of Italy the principal line of communication between that city and Germany. Finally, the acquisition of the Curzolari Islands, which dominate Dalmatia, would make Italy mistress of those regions, and the Adriatic Sea would become an Italian sea, in the case Italy maintained possession of Valona."²⁶

"As to the proposal contained in Article V, according to which the territories ceded by Austria-Hungary should be immediately transferred to Italy, Baron Burian observed that the rearrangements that such a proposal would

²⁵ I. G. B., 60, 71.

²⁶ Baron Macchio, Austro-Hungarian representative at Rome, in discussing the reply of his government with the Italian foreign minister, said: "To Austria-Hungary it would be like depriving a human being of air if the Italian border were to be pushed to the very gates of Trieste, if a free state were to arise which would cut off [Austria-Hungary's] access to the sea." A. R. B. (2), 147; I. G. B., 71.

carry with it, which would be impracticable even in time of peace for various reasons of general administration, . . . would be even more so in time of war. On this subject, he added that, without quoting other historical examples, it was sufficient to remember the procedure adopted on the occasion of the cession of Nice and Savoy to France in 1860, in which, even after the conclusion of peace, a certain number of months elapsed between the conclusion of the convention and the actual transfer of the ceded territories."

The Austro-Hungarian foreign minister also declared that his country could not "disinterest itself in Albania, a region so near the sphere of its most sensitive interests."²⁷ In an interview with the Italian ambassador at Vienna, he expressed (April 29) his willingness to discuss with the Italian foreign minister "the reciprocal interests in Albania, keeping in mind the changed circumstances during the present war, and to join with the Royal [Italian] Government in a new agreement regarding the same, which could, in establishing anew the question on European ground, imply also the disinterestedness of Austria-Hungary provided that Italy would equally disinterest herself in Albania, to the exception of Valona and of the sphere of interests which would have there

²⁷ I. G. B., 60, 71; A. R. B. (2), 144.

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their center, and that sufficient guarantees should be given against undertakings or establishments of other powers in Albania, an eventuality threatening the political and maritime interests of Austria-Hungary as well as those of Italy.”²⁸

It is needless to say that Baron Burian’s answer was unsatisfactory to Italy. He hoped, however (if we are to accept the opinion of the Italian ambassador at Vienna), that Italy would abate her demands, and believed that she would not go to war with Austria and Germany even though her “requests were not accepted integrally.”²⁹

If this was the opinion of the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister, he had woefully misjudged the situation in Italy,³⁰ for at this time both the Government and, apparently, the people also were determined to go to war rather than lose this opportunity of realizing their national aspirations. We are not surprised, therefore, that Italy decided to end the long and apparently fruitless negotiations. On May 3, Baron Sonnino notified the Austro-Hun-

²⁸ I. G. B., 75; A. R. B. (2), 44.

²⁹ I. G. B., 74.

³⁰ Baron Macchio thought (May 2) that public sentiment in Italy was “three quarters opposed to war.” The street demonstrations of May 16 and 17 at Rome and in the provinces in favor of war were, he seemed to think, arranged by the resigned cabinet as a political move. A. R. B. (2), 167, 187, 189, 191.

garian Government that he was constrained to withdraw all his "propositions for an accord" and that "Italy, confident in her good right, affirms and proclaims that from this moment she resumes her entire freedom of action, and declares her treaty of alliance with Austria-Hungary to be void and henceforth of no effect."³¹ The Austro-Hungarian Government protested against this action of Italy, saying that the treaty had been renewed to last until 1920, and could not be denounced or nullified before that date.³²

Prince von Bülow and Baron Macchio did not even now cease their efforts to win the neutrality of Italy, and in this endeavor they were probably supported by the Italian premier, Signor Giolitti. These efforts were rewarded with another offer made by Austria-Hungary May 18.

By the terms of this proposal, Austria-Hungary would cede to Italy that part of the Tyrol "the inhabitants of which are of Italian nationality," with the same boundaries as in the previous offer; and the territory west of the Isonzo, including Gradisca, the population of which is purely Italian. Trieste would become an imperial free city.

Austria-Hungary would also declare "her political disinterestedness with regard to Al-

³¹ I. G. B., 76.

³² A. R. B. (2), 200.

bania"; would not contest Italy's "unrestricted sovereignty over Valona and its bay, as well as over the sphere of interest surrounding it"; and would waive all claims for compensation growing out of the Italian occupation of the *Ægean Islands*.

The Austro-Hungarian Government would "issue a solemn proclamation concerning the territorial cessions immediately after the conclusion of [the] agreement," and mixed commissions would be appointed "to settle details in connection with the cession of the territories in question." "Military persons born in the territories ceded to Italy" would be "withdrawn from the fighting lines of the Austro-Hungarian army" immediately after the conclusion of the agreement.

Italy would undertake "to maintain absolute neutrality toward Austria-Hungary and Germany and Turkey as long as this war lasts," and would declare "her disinterestedness in any territorial or other advantage that might accrue to Austria-Hungary as a result either of the present military operations or of the treaties of peace that shall mark their end."

Austria-Hungary and Italy were both to accept "the guarantee assumed by Germany for the faithful and loyal execution of this agreement." ³³

³³ A. R. B. (2), 178, 185, 188, 190, 194.

Next day the provision as to mixed commissions was modified so as to read, in part, as follows: "The transfer of the ceded territories will take place as soon as the decisions taken by aforesaid commissions shall have been satisfied; it will be complete within one month."³⁴ Three days later (May 22) Baron Macchio was instructed by the Austro-Hungarian foreign office to ask Baron Sonnino if he would be willing to sign the above-mentioned agreement provided Austria-Hungary "met Italy still further on the question of the putting of the cessions into effect, without, however, conceding immediate military occupation." Baron Macchio raised this question in his interview with Sonnino next day, but the latter replied that this offer had come too late and, that, besides, the last proposal, even when finally amended, was not satisfactory.³⁵

The Italian premier in a speech June 2, 1915, referred to these proposals as an eleventh hour bid and intimated that he did not believe that they had been made in good faith. The fact that they contained no promise of immediate execution rendered them impossible of consideration, even if they had met Italy's wishes in other respects. Besides, he contended that they fell far short of his country's demands. The boundaries proposed for Trentino were,

³⁴ A. R. B. (2), 192, 195.

³⁵ A. R. B. (2), 202, 203.

he maintained, not those asked for by Baron Sonnino on April 8, and, if accepted, would leave Austria-Hungary in possession of the gates to Italy. The offer provided for the autonomy of Trieste; Sonnino had asked for its independence. Besides, there was no provision that would give Italy a satisfactory position in the Adriatic.³⁶

Austria's final bid had indeed come too late, for the Entente Governments had offered and Italy had accepted terms more favorable than any that the Central Powers had been able to promise. For by a secret treaty with the Allies, dated May 9, 1915, Italy had entered into an engagement with the Allies which tied her hands as regards further bargaining with the Teutonic Governments.³⁷

³⁶ See Salandra's speech.

³⁷ This treaty was published by the Bolsheviki after they got control in Petrograd in November, 1917. The full text of the treaty, translated from the Russian language, is printed in the *Current History Magazine*, published by the New York Times Company. The extracts given below are taken from this text by permission of the publishers. The following are the main provisions of the treaty:

IV. By the future treaty of peace Italy shall receive the Trentino, the whole of Southern Tyrol, as far as its natural and geographical frontier, the Brenner; the city of Trieste and its surroundings, the County of Gorizia and Gradisca, the whole of Istria as far as the Quarnero, including Volosca and the Istrian Islands, Cherso and Lussin, as also the lesser islands of Plavnik, Unia, Canidoli, Palazzuola, S. Pietro Nerovio, Asinello and Gruica, with their neighboring islets. . . .

V. In the Same way Italy shall receive the Province of Dalmatia in its present extent, including further to the north Lissarika and Trebinje (i. e., two small places in Southwestern

The war policy of the Government was supported by both houses of Parliament by large

Croatia), and to the south all places as far as a line starting from the sea close to Cape Planka [between Trau and Sebenico] and following the watershed eastward in such a way as to place in Italian hands all the valleys whose rivers enter the sea near Sebenico—namely, the Gikola, Krka, and Butisnjica, with their tributaries. To Italy also will belong all the islands north and west of the Dalmatian coast . . .

VII.

To Italy will be conceded the right of conducting the foreign relations of Albania; in any case Italy will be bound to secure for Albania a territory sufficiently extensive to enable its frontiers to join those of Greece and Serbia to the east of the Lake of Ohrida.

VIII. Italy shall obtain full possession of all the islands of the Dodecannese, at present occupied by her.

IX. France, Great Britain, and Russia recognize as an axiom the fact that Italy is interested in maintaining the political balance of power in the Mediterranean, and her right to take over, when Turkey is broken up, a portion equal to theirs in the Mediterranean—namely, in that part which borders on the Province of Adalia, where Italy has already acquired special rights and interests, laid down in the Italo-British convention. The zone to be assigned to Italy will, in due course, be fixed in accordance with the vital interests of France and Great Britain. In the same way regard must be had for the interests of Italy, even in the event of the powers maintaining for a further period of time the inviolability of Asiatic Turkey, and merely proceeding to map out spheres of interest among themselves. In the event of France, Great Britain, and Russia occupying during the present war districts of Asiatic Turkey, the whole district bordering on Adalia, and defined above in greater detail, shall be reserved to Italy, who reserves the right to occupy it.

X. In Libya Italy obtains recognition of all those rights and prerogatives hitherto reserved to the Sultan by the Treaty of Lausanne.

XI. Italy shall receive a military contribution corresponding to her strength and sacrifices.

XIII. In the event of an extension of the French and British colonial possessions in Africa at the expense of Germany,

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and enthusiastic majorities,³⁸ and on May 23, 1915, war was declared against Austria.³⁹ It was not until August 27, 1916, that a declaration of war against Germany was made, which was to be effective August 28.

France and Great Britain recognize to Italy in principle the right of demanding for herself certain compensations in the form of an extension of her possessions in Eritrea, Somaliland, Libya, and the colonial districts bordering on French and British colonies.

³⁸ A. R. B. (2), 198, 201.

³⁹ A. R. B. (2), 204.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LESSER BELLIGERENTS

As has been seen, Bulgaria at the opening of the war was smarting under the defeats of the last Balkan War, and was anxious to recover territory in Macedonia then held by Serbia. She had a seaport, Dedeagatch, on the Ægean Sea, but to get to it by rail her people were obliged to pass through Turkish territory. They were, therefore, desirous of getting from Turkey a strip of land that would properly link up Dedeagatch with their other possessions. Both the Teutonic and Entente Allies were, therefore, in a position to make tempting offers to Bulgaria.

The Bulgarian premier stated on August 9 that his country was ready to go to war on such terms as would satisfy her "national aspirations." She would join in with the Entente Allies if they could give binding guarantees that the portion of Macedonia which had been lost to Serbia in the second Balkan War and minor portions of Greek Macedonia would be restored to her. This was virtually an an-

nouncement that Bulgarian support would be sold to the highest bidder.

The Entente powers were handicapped in the game of bargaining. Serbia was unwilling to give up as much of her Macedonian territory as Bulgaria demanded, and the Greek king was opposed to the sacrifice of any of his possessions. Russia's announced intention to take Constantinople for herself also aroused the jealousy and fear of the Bulgarians. Besides, considerable friction developed between the Serbs and the Bulgars over the Valandova incident. On April 2 a Serbian blockhouse at Valandova was attacked by a band of raiders, with a loss of life on both sides. Serbia claims that these raiders were Bulgarian soldiers (*Komitadjis*). Bulgaria denied that they were and disavowed all responsibility for the invasion.

Russian diplomacy, however, smoothed over this cause of dispute, and the Entente were able (by August 10) to make Bulgaria a good offer. According to the *Giornale d'Italia*, they offered to meet her demands as to Serbian Macedonia, Serbia to be compensated out of Greek territory.

In the meantime, the diplomacy of the Central powers had been active and, as it later proved, more successful than that of their rivals. German bankers had in February made

large advances on a loan contracted by Bulgaria in the summer of 1914, and Turkey had agreed to allow Bulgarian express trains from Dedeagatch to go through without stopping on Turkish territory. Later a treaty was signed (announced August 23) between Bulgaria and Turkey by which the former was granted the coveted strip of the latter's territory, which would properly connect her seaport Dedeagatch with the interior of Bulgaria. The Bulgarian Government promised as its part of the agreement to maintain armed neutrality.

On September 21 Bulgaria began to mobilize, declaring at the same time that she was not preparing for war, but was only taking steps that were necessary to preserve armed neutrality. It looked now as if Bulgaria had decided to cast in her lot with the Teutonic allies. She was aided in making up her mind by the failure of the Allied campaign against the Dardanelles and the collapse of the Russian defensive in Poland. It is thought, too, that Bulgaria had entered into a secret agreement with the Central powers in July, 1915, whereby she was promised very liberal territorial concessions on condition that she would attack Serbia. At any rate, Bulgaria had decided that the Teutonic promises were either more alluring to her or else stood a better chance of being redeemed.

The Entente powers were not satisfied with

Bulgaria's explanation regarding the mobilization of her forces, and on October 3, 1915, Russia sent an ultimatum to Bulgaria stating that the events then taking place showed that the Government of King Ferdinand had decided "to place the fate of its country in the hands of Germany." "The presence of German and Austrian officers at the ministry of war and on the staff of the army, the concentration of troops in the zone bordering Serbia and the extensive financial support accepted from our enemies by the Sofia Cabinet, no longer leave any doubt as to the object of the military preparations of Bulgaria." The Russian minister was instructed to leave Bulgaria if the Bulgarian Government did not "within twenty-four hours openly break with the enemies of the Slav cause and of Russia, and does [did] not at once proceed to send away officers belonging to armies of states which are at war with the powers of the Entente."¹

Instead of complying with these demands, Bulgaria, on October 13, attacked Serbia and next day declared war on her. Great Britain declared war on Bulgaria October 14, and Russia and Italy followed suit on October 19.

Portugal and Great Britain have been bound together by the ties of friendship for centuries. It is said that since the time of Edward III

¹ Chicago *Herald*, October 4, 1915.

(1373) the two countries have been united by "a covenant of mutual support." This old agreement, revised by Cromwell and again by Charles II, was declared to be still binding in 1873 by Queen Victoria. Portugal was thus in close alliance with Great Britain when the war broke out in 1914. The fact that Portugal owes the security of her African possessions to British friendship makes her value the more highly her alliance with the mistress of the seas.

When Britain became involved in the war, Portugal declared her willingness to act on her obligations to her ally whenever the latter should desire it. This policy announced by the Government received the approval of Parliament and the support of the press and of all political parties. The Portuguese premier even offered to send an expeditionary force to aid the Allies in Belgium. There were, however, strong military and financial objections to Portugal's participation in the war, and it was decided best for the Allied cause for her not to break with Germany at this time. She, therefore, maintained a formal neutrality toward the Teutonic powers, but her heart was all the time with the Entente Allies.

The rôle that had been imposed upon Portugal by her friends was a difficult one to fill, and Germany charged her with numerous violations of neutrality. The final break did not come,

however, until March 9, 1916, when Germany declared war on Portugal. Austria-Hungary followed the German example on March 15. The immediate cause of the rupture was the seizure by the Portuguese Government of thirty-six interned German merchant vessels on the ground that her commercial needs urgently demanded an increase in her shipping facilities. Germany claimed, in her declaration of war, that the shortage in Portuguese tonnage did not justify the requisition of so many ships and that the Government had taken no steps toward satisfying the shipowners as to compensation. Sir Edward Grey, however, contended that the vessels would have been duly paid for if the German Government had had the patience to wait.

Rumania had an ambition to incorporate in her dominions the three and one-half million Rumans living in Transylvania, Bukovina, the Banat, and Bessarabia. As these territories now belong to Austria-Hungary and Russia, it follows that her aspirations can be realized only at the expense of these two neighboring powers.

When the Great War broke out, both groups of belligerents were thus in a position to make attractive bids for Rumanian neutrality or support. Each could offer territory already under its control and also lands that it hoped to

wrest from the enemy. Both sides were favored by advantages and hampered by disadvantages in the bargaining contest.

The Teutonic allies could start with an official friendship that had lasted for forty years. Russia had appropriated Rumanian Bessarabia after defeating Turkey in 1878 and had thereby destroyed the cordial feeling that had existed toward her among the Rumanian people. The Teutonic powers thus found it easy to extend their influence over Rumania. The present King of Rumania is a Hohenzollern, and her ruling aristocracy has been guided by German ideals.²

Despite all of this, however, at the outbreak of the great conflict, public sentiment in Rumania seemed to be overwhelmingly in favor of the Entente Allies, and she was expected to go into the war on their side. Entente diplomacy had, however, failed to win her over until August 27, 1916, when she entered the war against the Teutons. The Rumanian Government was induced to take this step partly by the fear of Bulgaria and partly on account of Allied suc-

² Since this chapter was written a good many other countries have either declared war on or broken diplomatic relations with the Central powers. As they have taken little or no part, however, in the activities of the war it has not been thought advisable to discuss their reasons for breaking with the Teutonic allies. For a list of these declarations with dates up to the end of 1917, see the *Statesman's Year Book* for 1917, p. xxvi.

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cesses on the western front and contemporaneous Russian successes in re-conquering Bukovina. This action also brought her into war with the allies of Austria-Hungary, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Germany.

PART III

WHY AMERICA ENTERED THE WAR

CHAPTER XIV

THE FIRST SUBMARINE CONTROVERSY

Our controversy with Germany began on February 4, 1915, at which time the German Government issued a proclamation declaring the waters around the British Isles a war zone. All enemy ships found in this zone on and after February 18, 1915, were to be "destroyed without its being always possible to avert the dangers threatening the crews and passengers on that account." The proclamation went on to recite that even neutral ships would be "exposed to danger in the war zone as in view of the misuse of neutral flags ordered on January 1st by the British Government and of the accidents of naval war, it cannot always be avoided to strike even neutral ships in attacks that are directed at enemy ships." The effort would be made to destroy all enemy merchant ships in the war zone even if it were not always "possible to avert the dangers which may menace persons and merchandise." Neutral powers were "accordingly forewarned not to continue to entrust their crews, passengers, or merchandise to such vessels."

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In short, this was a warning that neutrals would run a serious risk of losing their lives and their ships if they should venture into the war zone. The excuse given for this defiance of international law was that it was a retaliatory measure necessitated by Britain's restrictions on German trade. Great Britain, it was alleged, had violated international law by declaring the North Sea a war area, by extending unreasonably the lists of contraband of war, and by refusing to abide by the Declaration of London.¹

The United States Government felt that it could not acquiesce in this infringement of its rights as a neutral and so protested vigorously

¹ Jour. (9), 83-5.

The Declaration of London is a codification of the rules of naval warfare as agreed upon by representatives of the ten leading maritime states at a conference held in London in the winter of 1908-09. The Declaration, however, has not been ratified by all the countries represented at the conference and therefore does not have the binding force of international law. Great Britain was one of the powers which had not ratified the principles of the Declaration, although her representatives at the conference had signed it. In the beginning of the war our State Department asked all the belligerents if they would agree to be bound by the principles of the Declaration of London provided that their opponents would make the same pledge. The Teutonic allies replied that they would accept the Declaration on these conditions, but the Entente Allies declined to do so. The reason for this refusal was that Great Britain, being the strongest naval power of the belligerents and the one upon whom the restrictions of the Declaration would bear most heavily, objected to certain clauses, mainly those dealing with contraband of war. After this refusal our Government announced that it would not consider the articles of the Declaration as binding but would fall back upon the principles of international law. Jour. (9), 1-8; Rogers, *America's Case against Germany*, 41-43; War Cyclopedia.

against the proposed policy in a note dated February 10, 1915. It took the position that a belligerent's rights as to neutral ships on the high seas are confined to "visit and search unless a blockade is proclaimed and effectively maintained." And inasmuch as the proclamation did not provide for that, Germany had no warrant under international law to sink an American ship. A warning as to the consequences in case American ships or lives were destroyed was conveyed to the Imperial Government in strong terms as follows:

If the commanders of German vessels of war should act upon the presumption that the flag of the United States was not being used in good faith and should destroy on the high seas an American vessel or the lives of American citizens, it would be difficult for the Government of the United States to view the act in any other light than as an indefensible violation of neutral rights which it would be very hard indeed to reconcile with the friendly relations now so happily subsisting between the two Governments.

If such a deplorable situation should arise, the Imperial German Government can readily appreciate that the Government of the United States would be constrained to hold the Imperial German Government to a strict accountability for such acts of their naval authorities and to take any steps it might be necessary to take to safeguard American lives and property and to secure to American citizens the full enjoyment of their acknowledged rights on the high seas.²

The reply of Von Jagow, German foreign

² Jour. (9), 86-88.

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minister, to Secretary Bryan's note was made on February 16. It reiterated the reasons alleged for Germany's action, namely, that Great Britain was violating international law and that the policy proposed was necessary as an act of defense. He explained that it was far from the intention of the German Government "ever to destroy neutral lives and neutral property, but on the other hand they cannot be blind to the fact that dangers arise through the action to be carried out against England which menace without discrimination all trade within the area of maritime war." If neutral ships should enter this war zone they would "bear their own responsibility for any unfortunate accidents." The German Government would "expressly decline all responsibility for such accidents and their consequences." It was pointed out to our Government, however, that the German Government had "announced merely the destruction of enemy merchant vessels found within the area of maritime war."

It was intimated that such accidents were quite likely to happen inasmuch as British vessels were using neutral flags and it would be "very difficult for the German submarines to recognize neutral merchant vessels as such." Besides, it would be dangerous and therefore "not possible in the majority of cases" for the submarines to practice visit and search owing

to the fact that many English merchant ships were armed and the submarine commander who would be conducting the search would "in the case of a disguised English ship" be exposed to destruction.³

The policy announced by the German foreign office would, if enforced, be clearly a violation of international law. The Teutonic allies were not maintaining an effective blockade of the British Isles, as numerous vessels came to and went from the British ports after the announcement of the new policy. Germany, therefore, did not even have the right to *seize* a neutral vessel on the high seas (including in that term the war zone) unless it carried a cargo of contraband. A belligerent does have, however, the right to seize enemy merchant ships and even to destroy them provided it is not feasible to bring them into a prize court. There is also precedent in favor of the right of a belligerent to destroy in extreme cases neutral vessels carrying contraband; but in all cases no merchant vessel, neutral or enemy, can be destroyed until adequate provision has been made "for the safety of all persons on board." This view is supported by the unanimous opinion of the authorities on international law and the universal practice of belligerents before 1914. Germany's defense of her policy rested on the

³ Jour. (9), 90-96.

contention that the submarine cannot be effective if international law is observed and, therefore, an exception ought to be made in its favor. Our Government rightfully took the position that the dictates of humanity and the time-honored principles of international law should be upheld even at the cost of submarine efficiency.⁴

The fact that the submarine was placed at a disadvantage by virtue of England's sea methods did not in the least relieve Germany of the obligation to respect the rights accorded to neutrals by international law. Our Government was in no wise responsible for nor obligated to relieve the embarrassment in which the submarine was placed by British practices, even if those practices had overstepped the limits prescribed by international law. It is true that Secretary Bryan did on February 10 send a protest to the British Government against the "general use of the flag of the United States by British vessels traversing" the war zone; but in so doing he did not assume the responsibility of compelling Great Britain to conduct her naval warfare in accordance with the requirements of international law. It ought also to be remembered that while Germany complained of the acquiescence of the

⁴ Garner, *Inter. Law Jour.*, Vol. 9, 615, 617-19, 624; Vol. 10, 12-31; Rogers, 48-56.

neutral governments in England's alleged violations of international law, she did not charge that the United States had compromised her neutrality by such acquiescence. On the contrary, she stated in this same note that "the exercise of rights and the toleration of wrong on the part of neutrals is limited by their pleasure alone and involves no formal breach of neutrality. The German Government have not in consequence made any charge of formal breach of neutrality."⁵ Since the United States, according to the admission of Germany, had been guilty of no breach of neutrality, her rights on the sea were in no sense affected by the alleged ill conduct of Great Britain.

The submarine controversy entered upon the acute stage when Germany proceeded to act upon the policy outlined in her note of February 4. Our Government soon had reason for complaint against Germany because of the destruction of American lives and ships.⁶ These minor grievances were all reduced to compara-

⁵ Jour (9), 88-89, 92.

⁶ A citizen of the United States had lost his life on March 28, when the British steamer *Falaba* was sunk by a German submarine. The *Gulflight*, an American vessel, had been sunk by a submarine on May 1, and three American lives were lost. Another American vessel, the *William P. Frye*, had been sunk on January 28 by a German auxiliary cruiser, but the Imperial Government had on April 5 expressed its willingness in this case to compensate the owners for ship and cargo under the terms of the Prussian-American treaty of 1799. The other cases were still pending when the *Lusitania* was destroyed. Jour. (9), 130, 181-2.

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tive unimportance by the greater issue created by the sinking of the *Lusitania* on May 7, 1915. The *Lusitania*, an unarmed British merchantman, was sunk off the coast of Ireland by a German submarine and more than eleven hundred lives were lost, one hundred and fourteen of them being Americans. No warning had been given and no effort was made to save the lives of the passengers and crew. It is true that before the *Lusitania* left New York there had been published as an advertisement in the New York papers a notice, signed by the German embassy at Washington, which warned American citizens against taking passage on any enemy ship going through the war zone.⁷ For the German embassy to send such a notice to the American people except through the regular diplomatic channels was in itself an insult to our Government. Our Secretary of State called attention to its "surprising irregularity" in his first note to Germany after the sinking of the *Lusitania*.

On May 13, 1915, Secretary Bryan sent a note to the German foreign office, reminding it of the previously announced intention of his Government to hold "the Imperial German Government to a strict accountability for any infringement," "intentional or incidental," "of the rights of American ship-masters or of

⁷ See *War Cyclopedia*, p. 159.

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American citizens bound on lawful errands as passengers on merchant ships of belligerent nationality." He also expressed the earnest conviction that submarines could not be used against merchantmen "without an inevitable violation of many sacred principles of justice and humanity." The note assumed a threatening tone at the end and closed with this final warning:

The Imperial German Government will not expect the Government of the United States to omit any word or any act necessary to the performance of its sacred duty of maintaining the rights of the United States and its citizens and of safeguarding their free exercise and enjoyment.*

The German reply to this note was made on May 28. It contended that the *Lusitania* had been built with Government funds as an auxiliary cruiser; that on her last trip she had "Canadian troops and munitions on board," "as on earlier occasions"; that she carried a cargo prohibited by the laws of the United States to passenger vessels; and that, according to evidence in hand, "the *Lusitania* when she left New York undoubtedly had guns on board which were mounted under decks and masked." In making these representations the German Government reserved the right to make "a final statement of its position with

* Jour. (9), 129-133.

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regard to the demands made in connection with the sinking of the *Lusitania* until a reply is received from the American Government.”⁹

The reply of our Government to this communication was made on June 9 by Mr. Lansing, acting Secretary of State, because Mr. Bryan was unwilling to sign the note and had resigned as Secretary of State on the previous day. Our second note declared that the German Government had been misinformed as to the status of the *Lusitania*. Mr. Lansing pointed out that it was the duty of our Government “to see to it that the *Lusitania* was not armed for offensive action, that she was not serving as a transport, that she did not carry a cargo prohibited by the statutes of the United States;—and [that] it performed that duty and enforced its statutes with scrupulous vigilance through its regularly constituted officials.” The question as to whether she carried contraband was irrelevant, as that fact even if established gave the submarine commander no excuse for taking American lives. Only the actual resistance of the *Lusitania* “to capture or refusal to stop when ordered to do so for the purpose of visit could,” in his opinion, “have afforded the commander of the submarine any justification for so much as putting the lives of those on board the ship in

⁹ Jour. (9), 133-136.

jeopardy." The note reaffirmed the former representations and asked for assurances that American lives and ships would be safeguarded in the future.¹⁰

It was nearly a month (July 9) before the German foreign office replied to our second *Lusitania* note. In this reply Germany promised that American vessels would hereafter not be molested in the war zone provided they had such markings as would render them distinguishable from enemy vessels. This pledge was accompanied by an expression of the hope that the Government of the United States would guarantee that the vessels so marked would have no contraband on board. In order to provide for the safety of American passenger traffic the German Government was willing to extend the same immunity from attack to a reasonable number of neutral vessels, which were to carry the American flag and be marked in the same way "as the American steamers above mentioned." If the requisite number of neutral vessels could not be acquired by our Government then four enemy vessels could be placed under the flag of the United States under the same conditions as those mentioned for American ships.¹¹

In his reply on July 21, Secretary Lansing declared the last German note to be "very un-

¹⁰ Jour. (9), 138-141.

¹¹ Jour. (9), 149-153.

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satisfactory, because it fails to meet the real differences between the two Governments and indicates no way in which the accepted principles of law and humanity may be applied in the grave matter in controversy, but proposes, on the contrary, arrangements for a partial suspension of those principles which virtually set them aside." He noted with satisfaction the acceptance on the part of the German Government of the "principle that the high seas are free, that the character and cargo of a merchantman must first be ascertained before she can lawfully be seized or destroyed, and that the lives of non-combatants may in no case be put in jeopardy unless the vessel resists or seeks to escape after being summoned to submit to examination." He was disappointed, however, "to find that the Imperial German Government regards itself as in a large degree exempt from the obligation to observe these principles."

The offer of immunity from attack for vessels having certain markings was rejected, as "the very agreement would, by implication, subject other vessels to illegal attack and would be a curtailment and therefore an abandonment of the principles for which this Government contends." The note ended with the warning that a "repetition by the commanders of German naval vessels of acts in

contravention of those rights must be regarded by the Government of the United States, when they affect American citizens, as deliberately unfriendly.''¹²

The further negotiations as to the *Lusitania* were considered by informal notes between Ambassador Bernstorff and Secretary Lansing. On September 1, 1915, Count Bernstorff stated that his Government had pledged itself not to sink liners in the future, unless they should resist attack or try to escape, until adequate provision had been made for the safety of non-combatants.¹³ This pledge was not a settlement of the case but inasmuch as it was a promise of future good conduct, it considerably relieved the tension and made possible a more leisurely conduct of further negotiations.¹⁴

While the *Lusitania* case was still under discussion another serious cause of dispute arose

¹² Jour. (9), 155-7.

¹³ Jour. (10), 166.

¹⁴ The conversations between Count Bernstorff and Secretary Lansing were spun out to such a length that it was not until February, 1916, that an agreement had about been reached. At that time the two Governments had virtually come to an understanding as to the principles involved and only minor questions of phraseology were holding back a final settlement. But about this time the German Government announced (February 10) its intention to treat armed merchantmen as war vessels. As this announcement cancelled all pledges insofar as they applied to merchant vessels carrying arms, even for defense, Secretary Lansing refused to accept the German offer, and so the controversy remained unsettled. *N. Y. Times*, Feb. 16, 1916.

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between Germany and the United States. On August 19, 1915, the British unarmed steamer *Arabic* was torpedoed near the site of the destruction of the *Lusitania*. It was bound for New York, was unarmed, carried no contraband, and was sunk without warning. A considerable number of the crew and passengers, including two Americans, lost their lives.¹⁵ The German Government seemed to appreciate the seriousness of the situation and to fear that our Government would regard the destruction of American lives on the *Arabic* as an unfriendly act. Consequently, Count Bernstorff, the German ambassador at Washington, in a communication to Secretary Lansing in reply to his last *Lusitania* note, declared (September 1) that he had been instructed to make for his Government the pledge mentioned on the previous page.¹⁶ The German Government, however, tried (September 7) to excuse its submarine commander on the ground that although he had been ordered not to sink merchantmen without warning, he was under the impression that the *Arabic* was going to ram his vessel. It, therefore, declined to assume responsibility for the act even if it should be proved that the commander of the undersea boat had been mistaken.¹⁷

¹⁵ Rogers, 97; Jour. (10), 170-2, 203-229.

¹⁶ Jour. (10), 166.

¹⁷ Jour. (10), 167-8.

A week later Secretary Lansing forwarded evidence to the German Government which proved that the *Arabic* received no warning and that it did not see the submarine before it was fired upon. The commander of the submarine was, therefore, without excuse in assuming that the *Arabic* was preparing to ram his vessel.¹⁸

There was no immediate response to this note, but on October 5 the German Government declared its willingness to disavow the act and pay indemnities for the American lives lost. The incident was thus closed and America had won a diplomatic victory.¹⁹

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 170-2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 172-3.

CHAPTER XV

MINOR CONTROVERSIES AND THE SUSSEX CASE

THE fact that Great Britain's control of the sea put Germany at a disadvantage in purchasing munitions of war from us caused some pro-German Americans to agitate in favor of the prohibition by our Government of the export of arms and ammunition. Encouraged by this agitation the Teutonic allies protested against this trade, contending that our Government should lay an embargo on arms if it were to maintain a really neutral attitude toward the belligerents. These protests came in the form first of a hint or request in the German note of February 16, 1915; then as a complaint in a memorandum presented by the German ambassador, Count Bernstorff, April 4, 1915; and finally as a formal appeal from the Austro-Hungarian Government June 29, 1915.

The main arguments advanced to support their protest were that the trade in munitions had assumed such proportions as had never been known before and that the United States

was enjoying a complete monopoly of the sale of war supplies. It was admitted that Germany had allowed her nationals to sell ammunition to belligerents in previous wars, but in those cases the trade was open to many neutrals and it was only a question as to what share of this trade each neutral should get. The Austrian note even went so far as to say that the weight of authority on international law was in favor of the contention that a neutral nation may not permit the traffic in contraband of war when it assumes such dimensions as to involve the neutrality of the Government.¹

Our Government in its replies took the position that a neutral power has no right to change its laws on neutrality during a war provided such a change would affect unequally its relations with the belligerents and that an embargo on arms laid by our Government would be such a change; that this opinion is upheld by a very large majority of the authorities on international law and is explicitly confirmed by an article of the Hague Convention.²

¹ Jour. (9), 91, 92, 125-127, 146-149.

² The preamble to *Convention XIII Concerning the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers in Naval Warfare*, Hague Conference, 1907, contains the following statement:

... "these rules should not, in principle, be altered, in the course of the war, by a neutral Power, except in a case where experience has shown the necessity for such change for the protection of the right of that Power."

Article 7. "A neutral Power is not bound to prevent the

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Besides, it has been the universal practice for nations to permit the sale of munitions to belligerents, a practice in which both Germany and Austria have engaged in previous wars. In one of these wars—that between the Boer republics and Great Britain—the situation was parallel to the one at the present time. The Boer Allies were shut off from getting war supplies, but this fact did not cause Germany to stop the sale of munitions to Great Britain. It is true that in this case the amount sold was not so great as in the present war, but the principle involved is not affected by the extent of the business.

A very important practical reason was also given to explain “why the Government of the United States has from the foundation of the Republic to the present time advocated and practiced unrestricted trade in arms and military supplies. It has never been the policy of this country to maintain in time of peace a large military establishment or stores of arms and ammunition sufficient to repel invasion by a well equipped and powerful enemy. . . . In consequence of this standing policy the United States would, in the event of attack by a foreign power, be at the outset of the war seri-

export or transit, on behalf of one or other of the belligerents, of arms, munitions of war, or, in general, of anything which can be of use to an army or fleet.” Hague and Geneva Conventions, United States Navy Department, p. 70.

ously, if not fatally, embarrassed by the lack of arms and ammunition and by the means to produce them in sufficient quantities to supply the requirements of national defense. The United States has always depended upon the right and power to purchase arms and ammunition from neutral nations in case of foreign attack. This right, which it claims for itself, it cannot deny to others.”³

There was another important reason why our Government should not restrain its citizens from the exercise of a right accorded them by international law, but of course it could not be given as an argument in a diplomatic note. This reason was that a large majority of our people were in sympathy with the Allies because they thought that the war had been forced upon them and that they were fighting for the political and social ideals that are held sacred in America. Besides, Germany's treatment of Belgium and her method of conducting the war in defiance of international usage and the principles of humanity had still further alienated American sympathy from her. For that reason public sentiment in America would not permit the Government to strain its neutrality in the interest of the enemies of our kinsmen and friends. Then, too, Germany had before the war made adequate provision for

³ Jour. (9), 127-129, 166-171, 259-60.

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munitions and was thus armed. The Allies, on the other hand, had not provided for enough military supplies for the war and were, therefore, not so well armed as their enemies. The situation was like that of an unarmed man in a fight with an armed assailant, reaching for a pistol lying near him. An embargo on arms from America would have had the effect of pushing beyond his reach the pistol that would place him on an equal footing with his enemy and of putting him thereby at the mercy of his opponent. Such a policy on the part of America would not only have been unneutral; it would also have been unnatural. For the unarmed man was, in the case of England, our kinsman; in the case of France, our friend and former helper; and in both cases the champion of our ideals.

Another cause of disagreement between Germany and the United States was the question of armed merchantmen. As early as September 19, 1914, our Government stated its position as favoring the right of a merchantman to carry "armament and ammunition for the sole purpose of defense without acquiring the character of a ship of war."⁴ The German foreign office took exception to this ruling and contended (October 15) that an armed merchantman should be considered as a regular

⁴ Jour. (9), 234.

war ship and should be accorded the same treatment in neutral ports as the latter.⁵

Acting Secretary Lansing dissented from this opinion (November 7) and reiterated the intention of his Government to allow defensively-armed merchantmen to enjoy the hospitality of our ports. In defense of this policy he pointed out the well-established fact that "the practice of a majority of nations and the consensus of opinion by the leading authorities on international law, including many German writers, support the proposition that merchant vessels may arm for defense without losing their private character."⁶ Our Government now rested its case and the question was not agitated again for more than a year, though Germany had not receded from her position.

The case was reopened, however, at the beginning of the year 1916. "Italian and British ships were armed on account of the ruthless submarine campaign which was being waged in the Mediterranean. The hint was given that Germany intended to sink all armed merchantmen without warning."⁷ Secretary Lansing felt impelled to make an effort to prevent the "appalling loss of life among non-

⁵ *Ibid.*, 238.

⁶ *Jour.* (9), 238-240; also see Higgins, *Amer. Jour. of International Law*, Vol. 8, p. 715.

⁷ Rogers, 161.

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combatants," and in an effort to do so unfortunately weakened the unassailable position which he had hitherto held with reference to the mooted question. On January 18, 1916, he made proposals for a joint agreement between the Allied and Teutonic powers whereby the former were to promise not to arm their merchant vessels and the latter to pledge themselves to conduct their submarine warfare in accordance with the principle of visit and search, that is, according to international law. He even went so far as to contend that the arrangement proposed by him was just in view of the new situation created by the submarine. His communication closed with the following unhappy statement:

I should add that my Government is impressed with the reasonableness of the argument that a merchant vessel carrying an armament of any sort, in view of the character of submarine warfare and the defensive weakness of undersea craft, should be held to be an auxiliary cruiser and so treated by a neutral as well as by a belligerent Government, and is seriously considering instructing its officials accordingly.*

The Teutonic belligerents were quick to take advantage of Lansing's mistake and announced (February 10 and 12) that they would henceforth treat armed merchantmen as war ships. This meant, of course, that they would sink them without warning and would assume

* Jour. (10), 310-13.

no responsibility for the loss of neutral lives.⁹

If the Allies had acceded to this proposition they would have voluntarily given up all the protection that their merchantmen had against the submarines and would have placed them at the mercy of the undersea craft. That they would voluntarily make such a sacrifice in order to relieve Germany of the embarrassment in which international law had placed her could hardly be expected of the best-natured belligerents. Consequently, they all politely declined the offer of our State Department. The British ambassador in his reply made this statement: "Great Britain is unable to agree that upon a non-guaranteed German promise, human life may be surrendered defenseless to the mercy of an enemy who . . . has shown himself to be both faithless and lawless." ¹⁰

At this juncture Congress unfortunately took up the question and resolutions were offered providing that American citizens be warned to keep off of armed merchantmen. It looked as if the resolution would be supported by a large majority in both houses. President Wilson now took a firm stand with reference to the right of American citizens to travel on defensively-armed vessels and used his influence against the resolutions.

⁹ Jour. (10), 313, 318.

¹⁰ Jour. (10), 336-8, 340-1.

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The supporters of the President's policy mustered their forces against the resolutions and succeeded in having them tabled in both houses early in March. The executive was now free to deal with the situation without Congressional interference and final action was taken by our State Department on April 26. At that time there was published a memorandum (dated March 25) which definitely outlined the future attitude of the Government toward armed merchantmen. The position taken in this memorandum was, in brief, as follows:

A merchant vessel has the right to arm for defense and when so armed must be treated by both neutrals and belligerents as a merchantman. If armed for offense it assumes the status of a war ship and must be so regarded by both belligerents and neutrals. In determining whether the armament of a merchant vessel is for offense or defense the neutral must take into account all evidence, such as instructions to the commander, previous career of the vessel, size and position of the guns, etc. The neutral may act upon a reasonable presumption in withholding hospitality from an armed merchantman. On the other hand, a belligerent must act only on proof in treating an armed vessel as a war ship.¹¹

¹¹ Jour. (10), 367-72.

The negotiations regarding armed merchantmen proved to be of only academic interest, as the only important controversies between America and Germany before the break in relations resulted from the latter's attacks on unarmed merchantmen. In March four English vessels and one French liner ¹² on which were American citizens were sunk by German submarines and a number of American lives were lost. Secretary Lansing made prompt inquiry of Germany as to whether she or her allies were responsible for these sinkings.¹³ The most important of these cases was that of the *Sussex*. The *Sussex* was an unarmed French steamer, was sunk without warning in the British Channel on March 24, 1916, and about eighty non-combatant passengers "of all ages and sexes, including citizens of the United States, were killed or injured."

The German foreign office made its reply to Lansing's inquiries in a note bearing date of April 10. The sinking of three of the vessels was admitted and the case of another was still being investigated. The foreign minister contended, however, that these three vessels had tried to escape after having been summoned to stop and that in every case they were sunk only

¹² The *Englishman*, the *Manchester Engineer*, the *Berwindale*, the *Eagle Point*, and the *Sussex*.

¹³ Jour. (10), 181-3.

after the passengers had been put in life boats. The opinion was expressed that the *Sussex* could not have been injured by a German submarine but had probably been sunk by a British mine. It was admitted that a German submarine had torpedoed a vessel in the British Channel at about the time and place that the *Sussex* was sunk, but the submarine commander said that the vessel attacked by him had the appearance of a war ship. It could not have been the *Sussex*, the note contended, inasmuch as the picture of his victim drawn by the German commander did not correspond with a picture of the *Sussex* found in an English newspaper. The German foreign office went on to state that it would, however, welcome any additional evidence that the American Government might have at its disposal. In case the two Governments could not come to an agreement, Germany was willing to settle the facts by a mixed commission in accordance with the Hague Convention of 1907.¹⁴

A week later (April 18) Secretary Lansing made a reply which was a vigorous arraignment of Germany not only for this offense but for her whole submarine policy. He made the charge and backed it up with incontrovertible evidence that the *Sussex* had been sunk without warning by a German torpedo. The of-

¹⁴ Jour. (10), 183-186.

fense was aggravated, he said, by the fact that it was not an isolated case but only an extreme instance of an unjustifiable policy which had resulted in the loss of hundreds of American lives. This practice had been maintained in spite of assurances given by the German Government "to the Government of the United States that at least passenger ships would not be thus dealt with." At the end the note assumed the tone of an ultimatum. It said:

Unless the Imperial Government should now immediately declare and effect an abandonment of its present methods of submarine warfare against passenger and freight-carrying vessels, the Government of the United States can have no choice but to sever diplomatic relations with the German Empire altogether. This action the Government of the United States contemplates with the greatest reluctance but feels constrained to take in behalf of humanity and the rights of neutral nations.¹⁵

This vigorous assertion of American rights seemed to bring the German Government to a realization of the gravity of the situation. Lansing's note was followed by a speech made by President Wilson before a joint session of Congress in which the same principles were emphatically enunciated.¹⁶ Wilhelmstrasse was now doubtless convinced that the American Government had reached the limit of its

¹⁵ Jour. (10), 186-195.

¹⁶ Cong. Record, LIII, 6421-22.

patience. If a break in diplomatic relations were to be avoided it would have to accede to our demands.

When this second American note reached Berlin both Mr. Gerard, American ambassador at Berlin, and Von Jagow, German foreign minister, felt that a break in relations between the two powers was unavoidable. In a few days Ambassador Gerard was invited by Von Jagow to visit the Emperor at Great General Headquarters. The invitation was accepted and Mr. Gerard left Berlin for the meeting with the Kaiser on April 28th. At the interview the *Sussex* case and other topics were discussed and the Emperor seems to have spoken rather unreservedly. He frankly said that "there was no longer any international law." He wanted to know why our Government had not brought Great Britain to terms for her alleged breaches of international usage. Our ambassador very tactfully replied that it was for us to decide the order in which we would enforce our rights, and in doing so used this illustration: "I answered that, . . . as I had already told the Chancellor, if two men entered my grounds and one stepped on my flowerbeds and the other killed my sister, I should probably first pursue the murderer of my sister."¹⁷

¹⁷ Gerard, *My Four Years in Germany*, 260, 324-5, 339-41.

A favorable reply to Lansing's note came on May 4. To what extent the Kaiser had been influenced to meet our demands by the interview with our ambassador can only be conjectured. At any rate Germany had yielded though she had done it with a very bad grace. The general tone of Von Jagow's note was rasping and there was a flat denial of the charge that the sinking of the *Sussex* was only an instance of "the deliberate method of indiscriminate destruction of vessels of all sorts." It admitted the possibility that "the ship mentioned in the note of April 10 as torpedoed by a German submarine" might be identical with the *Sussex* and if such should prove to be the case the "German Government will [would] not fail to draw the consequences resulting therefrom." The astounding statement was also made that the German Government had never pledged itself to "conduct submarine warfare in accordance with the general principles of visit and search" in the war zone. Such a promise, however, was now made in the following clause of the note:

The German Government . . . notifies the Government of the United States that the German naval forces have received the following orders: In accordance with the general principles of visit and search and destruction of merchant vessels recognized by international law, such vessels, both within and without the area declared as a naval war zone, shall not be

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sunk without warning and without saving human lives, unless these ships attempt to escape or offer resistance.

With this pledge was coupled the statement that Germany counted on America's inducing Great Britain to "observe the rules of international law universally recognized before the war as they are laid down in the notes presented by the Government of the United States to the British Government on December 28, 1914, and November 5, 1915." If the Government of the United States should fail to induce all the belligerents to follow the laws of humanity, then Germany would reserve her liberty of action.¹⁸

Our State Department regarded this reply as a virtual acceptance of its demands. It was careful to explain, however, that it took it for granted that the Imperial German Government did "not intend to imply that the maintenance of its newly announced policy is [was] in any way contingent upon the course or result of diplomatic negotiations between the Government of the United States and any other belligerent Government." The concluding paragraph of the note was as follows:

In order, however, to avoid any possible misunderstanding, the Government of the United States notifies the Imperial Government that it can not for a

¹⁸ Jour. (10), 195-199.

moment entertain, much less discuss, a suggestion that respect by German naval authorities for the rights of citizens of the United States upon the high seas should in any way or in the slightest degree be made contingent upon the conduct of any other Government affecting the rights of neutrals and non-combatants. Responsibility in such matters is single, not joint; absolute, not relative.¹⁹

The pledge of the German Government was clinched by another note (May 8) which acknowledged that their submarine commander had disobeyed instructions in the *Sussex* case and had "been appropriately punished." It also disavowed the act and offered reparation.²⁰ The submarine controversy was now laid to rest for the time being and the firmness of our Government was rewarded with a diplomatic victory.

¹⁹ Jour. (10), 199-200.

²⁰ Rogers, 188.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FINAL BREAK

WHILE no serious controversy arose between our Government and that of Germany for about eight months after the *Sussex* pledge was made, still merchant vessels were being sunk without warning and neutral lives lost. The German foreign office, however, always had an explanation or excuse for these sinkings and firmly maintained that the *Sussex* pledge was being observed. Our Government seems to have accepted these explanations and to have taken the attitude that Germany was trying to live up to her promises.¹

Sentiment in Germany was divided as to the wisdom of prosecuting ruthless warfare. One party, composed of the jingoes, led by Von Tirpitz, and of all factions opposed to the chancellor, were in favor of giving free rein to the undersea boats even if it should bring America into the war. They hated America and despised her military and naval strength. The other party, headed by the chancellor, ap-

¹ Rogers, 192-195; Gerard, 357-8.

parently wanted to remain on good terms with the United States and opposed unrestricted submarine activity. Ambassador Gerard is of the opinion that both the chancellor, Von Bethmann-Holweg and the foreign minister, Von Jagow, were sincere in their professions of friendship for America and were favorably inclined toward peace negotiations. The chancellor expressed the hope that President Wilson would make an effort to bring the war to a close, saying that if he did not "public opinion in Germany would undoubtedly force a resumption of a ruthless submarine war." It looked, therefore, as if peace alone could prevent the accession to power of the party in favor of the cancellation of the *Sussex* pledge.

Ambassador Gerard was urged by Von Jagow and the chancellor to visit America and try to induce the President to take the initiative in an endeavor to end the war. Mr. Gerard did return to the United States for a short visit and had an interview with President Wilson in October, 1916. He was greatly impressed with President Wilson's desire for peace, and reported to the German chancellor on his return that he believed "the President was ready to go very far in the way of coercing any nation which refused a reasonable peace."²

² Gerard, 345, 346, 349, 358-9, 368.

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Whether the German Government was sincerely desirous of peace or only wanted to drive a wedge in between the Entente Allies cannot at this time be determined. At any rate the Teutonic allies sent notes to neutrals on December 12, 1916, announcing their willingness to negotiate for peace and asked these neutral powers to notify the Allied belligerents of their proposal. They did not, however, indicate what terms would be acceptable to them.³

Our Secretary of State passed on this proposal (December 16) and at the same time indicated that our Government would soon make, of its own accord, an overture of peace to the belligerents, which would, however, be in no sense connected with the Teutonic offer to negotiate.⁴ This overture came two days later (December 18) when President Wilson sent notes to all the belligerent nations asking them to state the terms on which they would be willing to conclude the war.⁵ The reply of the Teutonic allies to this note came on December 26, 1916. It did not give the terms that would be acceptable to them but only reiterated their willingness to negotiate and suggested a peace congress on neutral territory.⁶ The Entente powers replied to both the Teutonic pro-

³ Dip. Cor., 305-309.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 309-11.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 321-26.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 327-8, 333.

posals and President Wilson's note, stating in a general way the conditions on which they would stop fighting. These were based on the principle of restitution, reparation, and guarantees for the future. While the Teutonic allies had not put down their demands in a formal note, yet in a conversation with Mr. Gerard the chancellor had indicated (January, 1917) what concessions would be expected. These were out of all reason, and so the belligerents were still poles apart as to peace terms.⁷

These abortive efforts at peace ended on January 22, 1917, when President Wilson made a speech before the United States Senate giving in a general way his idea as to the principles on which a just settlement should be based. A peace founded on such principles would, he thought, be lasting, and only such a peace would the United States be willing to assist in guaranteeing.⁸

The peace moves had now failed and the chauvinists and advocates of ruthless submarine warfare were in control in Germany. Whether they owed their ascendancy to the failure of the peace drive cannot as yet be determined. If we can accept at face value statements made by the chancellor and foreign min-

⁷ *Ibid.*, 311-313, 335-39; Gerard, 365-6.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 381-86.

ister, this party had in its favor the belief on the part of the German Government that America would not go to war even if unrestricted submarine activity were resumed. This conviction was also shared by the German people, in the opinion of Mr. Gerard. They considered that inasmuch as President Wilson had run on his peace record, his re-election was equivalent to a mandate from the American people to keep out of war at any cost.⁹

Before President Wilson had made his peace address, the German foreign office had decided to cancel all its previous pledges and to enter upon a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare.¹⁰ Accordingly, on July 31, our State Department was notified by Count Bernstorff, German ambassador at Washington, that on the next day Germany would declare the sea areas around Great Britain, France, and Italy and in the eastern Mediterranean as war zones and would sink all vessels, neutral as well as belligerent, that should venture into these prohibited areas. "All sea traffic," the memorandum continued, "will be stopped with every available weapon and without further notice." An exception to this general policy would be made in favor of American passenger vessels

⁹ Gerard, 364.

¹⁰ We know that this policy was decided on as early as January 19 because the Zimmermann note which refers to it bears that date. See *War Cyclopaedia*, p. 312.

if they would adhere to the following regulation: They must go to Falmouth only and in a certain lane designated in the memorandum. Only one trip each way was to be made each week; the ships were to be marked with broad vertical stripes; and their cargoes must include no articles that Germany had defined as contraband.¹¹

The situation was now worse than it had ever been before. President Wilson was faced by two alternatives. He had either to back down from the position he had taken in the *Sussex* note and thereby announce his inability or unwillingness to protect American citizens in their recognized rights, or break relations with Germany and thereby declare his intention to uphold the dignity and right of his country. He chose the latter alternative and relations between the two Governments were broken off on February 3, 1917. On that same day President Wilson made a speech before Congress announcing the break with Germany and giving his reasons for such important action. In this address he said, in part:

Notwithstanding this unexpected action of the German Government, this sudden and deeply deplorable renunciation of the assurances given this Government at one of the most critical moments of tension in the relations of the two Governments, I refuse to believe that it is the intention of the German authorities to

¹¹ Dip. Cor., 403-407.

do in fact what they have warned us they will feel at liberty to do. . . . Only actual overt acts on their part can make me believe it even now. . . . If American ships or American lives should in fact be sacrificed by their naval commanders in heedless contravention of the just and reasonable understandings of international law and the obvious dictates of humanity, I shall take the liberty of coming again before the Congress, to ask that authority be given me to use any means that may be necessary for the protection of our seamen and our people in the prosecution of their peaceful and legitimate errands on the high seas.¹²

When our ambassador at Berlin was notified of the break in relations, he immediately asked for his passports. They were denied him for the alleged reason that Count Bernstorff might be detained in America and the German ships in American harbors were reported to have been confiscated by the Government. Ambassador Gerard tells us that he was asked by the acting foreign minister to sign a document reaffirming and adding to the treaty of 1799 between Prussia and the United States and was told that if he refused to do so "it would be very difficult for Americans to leave the country, particularly the American correspondents." Mr. Gerard declined to sign the paper, saying at the time, "I would stay here until hell freezes over before I would put my name to such a paper."

Our ambassador was in the meantime vir-

¹² Dip. Cor., 409-13.

tually a prisoner in his residence. He was cut off from telephone, mail, and telegraph privileges for a few days until a message was received in Berlin from the editor of the *New York Times*, stating that Bernstorff was being courteously treated in America and Germany's ships had not been confiscated. He was then allowed to leave for the United States.¹³

Germany proceeded to put into practice the policy announced on January 31. The submarines became more active than ever, and nearly one hundred ships are said to have been sunk in two weeks. Two American ships were in this number and American lives had also been lost. These sinkings were, however, as President Wilson said, accompanied by "no circumstances which might not have been expected at any time in connection with the use of the submarine against merchantmen as the German Government has used it." In other words, the President took the position (February 26) that no overt act had been committed and the situation was virtually the same as it was when diplomatic relations were severed. But our vessels were afraid to leave port for the war zone and the effect of the German threat was to drive American and other neutral shipping off the high seas.¹⁴

¹³ Gerard, 375-385.

¹⁴ Rogers, 208-9; Cong. Record, LIV, 4272.

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President Wilson felt that our Government should take steps to restore to American commerce its rights on the ocean. His plan was to arm our merchant ships so that they could effectively defend themselves from undersea attack. He considered that he had power to do this without any special authorization from Congress, but felt that a policy fraught with such serious possibilities should have the support of the representatives of the people. Accordingly, he appeared before Congress (February 26) and asked for authority to arm American merchantmen for defense "and to employ any other instrumentalities or methods that may be necessary and adequate to protect our ships and our people in their legitimate and peaceful pursuits on the seas."¹⁵

Resolutions empowering the President to arm our merchant ships were offered in both the Senate and the House of Representatives and both houses were overwhelmingly in favor of the policy. There was, however, some opposition to the proposal that the President be given discretionary power as to the use of "other means and instrumentalities" and also to the inclusion in the list of ships to be protected by the Government those vessels carrying contraband of war.

While Congress was still considering the

¹⁵ Cong. Record, LIV, 4272, cited by Robinson and West.

question there was made public an important document which had come into the possession of our State Department. This was a letter written on January 19, 1917, by Dr. Alfred Zimmermann, German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to Von Eckhard, German minister to Mexico. In this letter Dr. Zimmermann stated that Germany would soon resume ruthless submarine warfare and that the United States might in consequence be drawn into the war. In case the United States should enter the war against Germany, the Mexican minister was to try to form an alliance between Germany and Mexico. Financial support could be promised Mexico, and she would be encouraged by Germany "to reconquer the lost territory in New Mexico, Texas and Arizona." The German minister was also to suggest "that the President of Mexico, on his own initiative, should communicate with Japan suggesting adherence at once to this plan."¹⁶

The publication of this note strengthened the sentiment in Congress in favor of a more vigorous policy toward Germany and the House of Representatives passed the armed neutrality bill by an almost unanimous vote.¹⁷ The bill as it passed the House omitted the

¹⁶ This letter can be found conveniently in the *Handbook of the War* (National Security League), pp. 37-8.

¹⁷ The vote was 403 to 13.

clause empowering the President to "employ any other instrumentalities or methods" that he might deem necessary. A very large majority of the senators were also in favor of the measure but a small "group of willful men" in the upper house were by filibustering opposition able to keep the resolution from coming to a vote before the session came to an end on March 4. The policy of armed neutrality had, however, received a virtual endorsement by Congress, and on March 12 a proclamation was issued stating that merchantmen passing through the war zone would be armed for defense.

In the meantime, Germany was carrying out her ruthless submarine warfare and many overt acts were committed. President Wilson had already (March 9) summoned Congress to meet in extra session on April 16. But the situation was becoming so grave that the President considered it necessary for Congress to convene at an earlier date. Accordingly, he issued another proclamation calling Congress together on April 2, "to receive a communication by the Executive on grave questions of national policy, which should be immediately taken under consideration."

On the opening day of this special session (April 2), President Wilson appeared before Congress in joint session and made his famous

address advising a declaration of war. In a spirit of sorrow rather than of anger he pointed out the wrongs that our people, as well as those of other neutral countries, had suffered at the hands of Germany, and the duty incumbent upon our Government to take such action as would uphold American rights. In speaking of German war practices since her new policy went into effect, he made the following scathing indictment:

The new policy has swept every restriction aside. Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom without warning and without thought of help or mercy for those on board, the vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents. Even hospital ships and ships carrying relief to the sorely bereaved and stricken people of Belgium, though the latter were provided with safe conduct through the proscribed areas by the German Government itself and were distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, have been sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion or of principle.

Another grievance mentioned by the President was the criminal activity in our country of German spies, which, he said, had begun even before the war. The Prussian autocracy had "filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of government with spies and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot against our national unity of counsel, our peace within and without, our industries and

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our commerce." These intrigues, he said, have "been carried on at the instigation, with the support, and even under the personal direction of official agents of the Imperial Government accredited to the Government of the United States."

He made it clear that we were not going to fight to avenge the loss of property but only to protect "the lives of non-combatants, men, women and children, engaged in pursuits which have always, even in the darkest periods of modern history, been deemed innocent and legitimate." "American ships," he continued, "have been sunk, American lives taken, in ways which it has stirred us very deeply to learn of, but the ships and people of other neutral and friendly nations have been sunk and overwhelmed in the waters in the same way. There has been no discrimination. The challenge is to all mankind. Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it."

Armed neutrality had proved ineffective and so a more vigorous policy had to be resorted to, unless we were willing to acquiesce in the high-handed measures practiced against us. His position on this point was, however, very decided:

There is one choice we can not make, we are incapable of making: we will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our

nation and our people to be ignored or violated. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life.

There was, therefore, in his opinion, only one alternative, namely, a declaration of war on the part of Congress. He accordingly made the following recommendation:

With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the government and the people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it; and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.

In giving reasons for our taking up the sword the President did not confine himself to the obligation of his Government to defend the rights of its citizens, but he spoke of a higher motive—the desire to promote universal peace and to “make the world safe for democracy.” These high aims are beautifully expressed as follows:

Our object now, as then, is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as

against selfish and autocratic power and to set up amongst the really free and self-governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth ensure the observance of those principles. Neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable when the peace of the world is involved and the freedom of its peoples, and the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people. We have seen the last of neutrality in such circumstances. We are at the beginning of an age in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and of responsibility for wrong done shall be observed among nations and their governments that are observed among the individual citizens of civilized states.

We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feelings toward them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval. It was a war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old, unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties or of small groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellow men as pawns and tools. Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbor states with spies or set the course of intrigue to bring about some critical posture of affairs which will give them an opportunity to strike and make conquest. Such designs can be successfully worked out only under cover and where no one has the right to ask questions. . . .

A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants. It must be a league of honor, a partnership of opinion. . . .

We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose

because we know that in such a government, following such methods, we can never have a friend; and that in the presence of its organized power, always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, there can be no assured security for the democratic governments of the world. We are now about to accept gauge of battle with this natural foe to liberty and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power. We are glad, now that we see the facts with no veil of false pretence about them, to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included: for the rights of nations great and small and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience. The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them. . . .

It is a distressing and oppressive duty, Gentlemen of the Congress, which I have performed in thus addressing you. There are, it may be, many months of fiery trial and sacrifice ahead of us. It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts,—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all na-

tions and make the world itself at last free. To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.¹⁸

The idealism behind the high motives mentioned by the President was doubtless an important reason for our joining the Allies. Our people considered that the Entente Allies were championing in Europe the principles held dear in America. A defeat for the Allies would, therefore, mean a defeat for democracy and world peace and a victory for autocracy and militarism.

There was also a feeling in the United States that a far-sighted policy of self-defense demanded our participation in the conflict. For it was thought that if Germany should win in this war, her enhanced power and prestige would lead her to attack us at no distant date in the future. With our natural allies weakened and humiliated and ourselves isolated, the German Government, flushed with victory, might soon be tempted to measure swords with us on our side of the Atlantic. The occasion for such a contest could easily arise. Ger-

¹⁸ Dip. Cor., 422-29.

many had ambitions in South America and does not recognize our Monroe Doctrine. Besides, feeling in Germany was already strong against America because of our sympathy for and alleged partiality to the Allies. We now have reliable evidence to support the belief that the German Government was contemplating the future possibility of chastising us. Mr. Gerard speaks of the hostility of public sentiment manifested toward us in influential circles in Germany. He tells of an interview given out by Admiral von Tirpitz (in the name of a "high naval authority") and published in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* in which the German admiral boasted that Germany would force America to pay an indemnity big enough to cover the cost of the war after the Allies had been defeated and the English fleet captured.¹⁹ Mr. Gerard also reports some big talk indulged in by the Emperor on the occasion of an interview held between the Emperor and himself as early as October, 1915. On this occasion the Kaiser showed "great bitterness against the United States and repeatedly said, 'America had better look out after this war; and I shall stand no nonsense from America after the war.'"²⁰

Congress was prompt to act on the recommendation of the President and declared on

¹⁹ Gerard, 249.

²⁰ Gerard, 252.

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April 6, 1917, that a state of war exists between Germany and the United States by act of the German Imperial Government.²¹ The President had not asked for a declaration of war on the allies of Germany because they had "not made war upon us or challenged us to defend our right and our honor."²² Germany was, therefore, the only one of the Central powers formally included in our list of enemies at this time, and it was not until December 17, 1917, that a declaration of war was made against Austria-Hungary.²³

²¹ *War Cyclopedia*, Art., "War."

²² *Dip. Cor.*, 437-8.

²³ *War Cyclopedia*, "War."

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